The German Tribune

Hamburg, 26 March 1989
Twenty-eighth year - No. 1364 - By air

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF THE GERMAN PRESS

C 20725 C
ISSN 0016-8858
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Bonn and East Berlin: a delicate balancing act

DIE ZEIT

Ambivalence is a keynote of intra-German relations. While Bonn Economic Affairs Minister Helmut Haussmann and Housing Minister Oscar Schneider demonstratively cancelled visits to the GDR on account of would-be refugees killed by East German border guards at the Berlin Wall, North Rhine-Westphalian Premier Johannes Rau no less demonstratively went ahead with his visit to the Leipzig Fair, where he met GDR leader Erich Honecker.

Herr Rau preferred not to let the thread of talks break and to lodge his protest in person.

The shooting shows what the situation is really like in the other German state and how the Communist regime continues to batten down the hatches. Yet Herr Honecker has now included Kiel and Hamburg in arrangements for cross-border traffic with less red tape and holds forth prospects of further improvements in contacts between the two halves of Berlin.

This point counterpoint has always been a feature of relations between the two German states. The policy of a limited opening to the West has earned East Berlin billions in hard currency, but it has also fomented domestic unrest.

Conversely, Bonn faces the contradiction that its payments to the GDR both benefit ordinary East Germans and consolidate communist rule there.

The success story of intra-German relations to date has been based on these contradictions being accepted and allowed to form part of a pragmatic approach.

For some time, however, their existence, let alone their continued existence, has been in jeopardy. What people in the GDR want in the wake of the policy of opening to the West has been joined by their response to glasnost and perestroika in the East.

The GDR leaders' reservations on, not to say rejection of, reform moves in the Soviet Union and other East bloc states tends to heighten this response. The atmosphere is tense.

Hopes and dreams are on the increase in the Federal Republic too, even if they are often mere figments of the imagination in comparison with the realities of the situation.

This is certainly true of the new national romantic outlook which, given the changes that are under way in the East, feels the time has come to bring the German Question back on to the agenda of world affairs, solving it by means of reunification.

Below the lofty heights of these illusions questions as to the ratio of give and take in intra-German ties are increasingly arising.

The Federal government will find it more difficult to justify its policy toward the GDR at home, especially if the Bonn coalition parties go even a little way toward echoing recent right-wing trends. So tension is on the increase here too.

Is the entire climate of intra-German ties growing harsher? The stiff-necked attitude of GDR leaders toward reform and the sticklers for principles who are thereby encouraged in the Federal Republic are creating an increasingly explosive situation.

The shortfall in common sense that is starting to gain ground in this context is evidenced by the vehement criticism of the Bonn government's decision not to be too stingy in renegotiating the lump sum payment in return for overland transit rights to and from Berlin.

The substantial increase is a shrewd move, not only because the terms agreed will be in force until the end of the century, stabilising a lifeline, but because it sets a political scene for further progress and other projects.

These ought to include both new and direct easements for ordinary people and, for instance, a common environmental policy. The East Berlin government is reluctant because it is well aware what a Hereculean task it would then face.

Nothing will be possible without payments and loans from the West that would amount to billions over the years in view of the need to modernise many outdated GDR factories.

Yet ought improvements from which people stand to benefit, including people on this side of the border, on the Werra and the Weser, on the Elbe and by the North Sea, to be stalled and stalemated on this account?

As long as the issue of human rights and shooting at would-be refugees to kill is on the agenda the realisation of projects that are in the joint interest, difficult enough as they are, will be made extra difficult.

All Deutschlandpolitik here comes up against barriers set up not only by differences between systems but by special in-

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Congratulations, dad. Frederike Momper presents her father, Walter Momper, with a bouquet of flowers to mark his inauguration as mayor of West Berlin. At right is Frau Anne Momper. Shepard Stone writes on Berlin, page 4. (Photo: dpa)

Berlin's Red-Green coalition a political litmus test

The new mayor of Berlin is Walter Momper. The Social Democrat succeeds Eberhard Diepgen (CDU). Although the SPD and CDU both have 55 members in the Berlin assembly following the election in January, the SPD has the support of 17 Alternative List (Greens) members. The remaining 11 members are from the extreme right-wing Republican Party. The "Red-Green" Senate (Cabinet) comprises eight women and six men, the first time there have been more women than men in any Cabinet in any *Land*. The Alternative List holds three portfolios, Women, Education and Environment.

The Berlin coalition of Social Democrats and the Alternative List has got off to an unfaltering start. Anyone who had expected the coalition to be snarled up in the city's complicated constitutional requirements was put to rights by the faultless discipline of the coalition parties as they cast their crucial first votes.

The seemingly effortless manner in which the new Senate was voted in — its first political acid test — showed yet again how well aware the SPD and the Greens are of the significance of their move.

Both well know, no matter how often the Social Democrats may deny it, that their joint venture will serve as a model in forthcoming polls in the Federal Republic, up to and including next year's general election.

Politicians in the Federal Republic will inevitably now take a closer look at Berlin, some in hopes of seeing the progress of the SPD-Green coalition as a deterrent, others with a view to seeing how coalition alternatives might fare.

Is a burden of this kind a spur to special achievement or does it tend to paralyse the parties?

SPD Mayor Walter Momper's female Cabinet, with a sprinkling of statutory males, made such a cheerful and hopeful initial impression as it set out on the thorny road to reform that the former would seem to be more the case.

The decisive factor is sure to be how and in what sectors the junior partner in the coalition, the Alternative List, seeks to demonstrate that it is no appendage of the SPD or mere supplier of a majority in the House of Representatives.

The Greens will want to show that they are a separate and distinct party with a profile of their own. If the Alternative List in Berlin goes about it in the same way as Greens in other parts of the country have done in the past, the days of this coalition will be numbered.

If the Alternative List agrees to political objectives on which consensus and compromise are possible, and if it subordinates its marked party-political egoism to responsibility for the common good of Berlin, the result could be an interesting impetus for reform emanating from the city.

Hans-Jürgen Müller
(Hamburger Abendblatt, 17 March 1989)

■ INTERNATIONAL

Touches of disunity in the patrician surrounds of the viribus unitis

Until recent Western Europe seemed to have built up a full head of steam and only to be waiting to get moving toward the European internal market and, later, even to a political union.

Three men were at the ready in the driver's cab to point the locomotive toward a new era.

They were: President Mitterrand of France, re-elected just over a year ago for a second seven-year term; Chancellor Kohl of Germany, head of the Bonn government since 1982 and likely to continue to do so until the mid-1990s; and Jacques Delors, president of European Commission in Brussels, who seems likely to remain at the helm there until 1992.

Yet now, at the speed that can come as such a surprise in politics, the trio have a grey and grumpy look — M. Delors apart.

Helmut Kohl, arguably the last convinced European among Bonn Chancellors, is waging a domestic battle for political survival.

François Mitterrand, who was given a clear political mandate but not a majority in the National Assembly by French voters, is governing in a listless, lacklustre manner.

Rumours are already circulating in the French capital that President Mitterrand, 72, is considering early retirement in a few years' time.

As is always the case when leadership and verve show signs of flagging, communication cords are pulled and irritation and nervousness multiply — even between traditional partners Bonn and Paris, the *couple franco-allemand*.

The latest but clearly not last of these irritations occurred, of all places, at the conference on conventional disarmament, opened earlier this month at Emperor Franz-Josef's magnificent Austro-Hungarian *Hofburg* in Vienna.

Viribus unitis, the Latin name of the hall where the conference began, was mistakenly translated in *Die Zeit* as "united associates;" it should, of course, have been "united forces."

As it happened neither German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher nor his French counterpart, Roland Dumas, did justice to either rendering of this high-flying Habsburg name.

M. Dumas chose to go it alone with a remark in his conference speech that greatly upset Bonn diplomats and a number of newspapers.

France seemed once more to be playing a special role and, worse still, to be proposing special treatment for the Federal Republic of Germany.

M. Dumas first outlined the Nato proposal to subdivide the enormous land mass from the Atlantic to the Urals that is to be dealt with at the talks into specific regions.

That makes sound military sense. A tank in Spain does not have the same status for a surprise attack in Central Europe as a tank stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany or the GDR.

When arms cuts are finally implemented, the pacts are not to be entitled to make reductions in the remote hinterland and to transfer units to the front line as they see fit.

Arms reductions must be from front to rear, as it were. Nato staff officers insist on regional distinctions to ensure military safeguards in the enormous area to which arms cuts are to apply. Various Bonn governments, including that of Helmut Kohl and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, have constantly warned against separating the territory of the Federal Republic from that of its allies in Western Europe by means of special arms control stipulations.

Bonn has been worried, rightly or wrongly but certainly for ages, about the risk of political decoupling. And the French Foreign Minister poured grains of salt into this wound in Vienna.

"Certain states on whose territory the most forward-based forces are stationed," he said, "will be the object of a special treatment and a discussion appropriate to their situation. In Nato, for instance, they include the Federal Republic of Germany and the Benelux countries."

The hazard lights promptly started to flash in the minds of West German disarmament experts, and Bonn, nervous in any case, was upset about the unreliable French.

The East had already called in Vienna for arms to be thinned out on a priority basis along the line of confrontation in Central Europe. Was Paris now supplying grist for Moscow's mill?

France had repeatedly stressed the importance of Franco-German defence cooperation. It did so in M. Dumas's speech even. But were old patterns of thought now prevailing?

Had Franco-German relations been relaxed and harmonious — and that is the important aspect of the entire issue — this storm in a teacup would be most unlikely to have occurred.

True, M. Dumas ought to have shown the controversial section of his speech to his German counterpart and friend Herr Genscher beforehand.

But M. Dumas is not in the best of health (neither is Herr Genscher), and for the most part he merely repeated what President Mitterrand had said at the United Nations last September.

Besides, the Nato concept officially and expressly provides for disarmament in all zones and sub-regions to come into force "simultaneously and in the entire area from the Atlantic to the Urals only."

So French territory and equipment would be involved, and the French have not been alone in advocating special sub-region status for an area comprising the Federal Republic of Germany, Benelux, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Poland; so have America and Britain. Yet Bonn would have preferred a greater degree of French support, and minor disappointment will lead to major frustration if Paris and Bonn drag their feet on the political groundwork of Western Europe.

That is why the latest upset, which the Bonn Foreign Office has swallowed, is a signal. As the French, with their strongly marked sovereignty principles, still set the limits to political cooperation, any move toward further Western European initiatives would have to be made by France.

But Paris has adopted a wait-and-see approach. The single internal market, or so the convenient, prevailing view would have it, will bring about political integration somehow or other.

That is a mistaken assumption. In[...] naive enthusiasm for "Europe 1992" [...] France is giving way to growing alarm.

According to a recent survey 58 per cent of the French are worried about the European internal market and only 3[...] per cent favour priority for political integration in Western Europe.

Annoyance with M. Dumas' Vienna speech is thus a warning politicians in Paris and Bonn would do well to heed.

Unless the economic upsets the internal market will inevitably trigger are soon offset by political links, the outcome will be a Western Europe at loggerheads, not a united Western Europe.

There will then be very much deeper divides between France and the Federal Republic than different disarmament zones in a negotiating concept for the Vienna talks.

Christoph Bertram

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 17 March 1989)

The 'intellectual architecture' is key to ties

The jolt to German-American ties given by German firms helping to build a factory to manufacture chemical weapons in Libya could hardly have been more severe.

Expressions used by some commentators in the US media, up to and including the concept of "Auschwitz in the sand," could hardly be outdone.

Are traditional friendly relations between Bonn and Washington gradually coming adrift? "In assessments of the position and outlook for German-American relations," says Werner Weidenfeld, "there have been a number of upsets."

Professor Weidenfeld has been the Bonn government's coordinator of German-American cooperation in societal, cultural and informational affairs since October 1987.

Professor Weidenfeld, who holds the chair of political science at Mainz University, concludes that: "A sense of political and historical proportion is needed on both sides of the Atlantic."

Transatlantic ties have, he says, "repeatedly been accompanied by such momentary upsets without really affecting the politico-cultural framework of reliable friendship."

Regardless of these reciprocal problems of mutual understanding he has made it clear, in an interview with the Mainz *Allgemeine Zeitung*, that:

"The exemplary friendship between the two countries will not be determined by what may be criminally indictable behaviour by a private company or by an individual weapon category and its modernisation (short-range nuclear missiles — Ed).

"The future of this friendship will be determined by whether we succeed in keeping the intellectual architecture of the friendship alive among successor generations."

Professor Weidenfeld, whose work as Bonn government coordinator is in a strictly honorary capacity, takes a most optimistic view of the prospects. Despite a number of irritations German-American relations are, he says in his annual report for 1988, in good condition. Professor Weidenfeld, who took over his role as coordinator from state secretaries Hildegard Hamm-Brücher and Berndt von Staden, refers in this connection to a number of promising factors.

On 10 visits to the United States he has laid the groundwork, jointly with the Bonn Federal government, for ongoing German-American friendship.

The starting-point was his diagnosis, as a political scientist, that both sides are in the throes of an extremely sensitive historical phase.

As power passes from one generation to the next "vital interest in Europe is on the decline and vice-versa."

At the same time the economic attraction of the Pacific basin has wielded its spell on leading US businessmen.

Last not least, the intellectual distance between America and Germany is on the increase. Fewer and fewer leading US academics have close ties with German arts and science.

"But we will soon be setting up a German-American Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences," he proudly notes. German bodies are sounding out the alternatives in Bonn.

He expects "the first phase of practical implementation" to be early next year.

There are also plans for a bilateral research and scholarship programme, a new scholarship scheme for future American leaders and the promotion of three interdisciplinary centres for German and European studies in the United States.

Professor Weidenfeld attaches no less importance to intensifying youth exchange than to promoting academic and scientific cooperation.

At present 17,000 young people a year cross the Atlantic and see for themselves, with financial backing from the German Federal government, "how the other half lives."

Ties of friendship, Professor Weidenfeld says, must be extended even further across the generation gap. Which is why he has called on the *Länder*, or Federal states, to back similar schemes.

He has already met with a positive response from the state assemblies in Wiesbaden, Hesse, and Mainz, Rhineland-Palatinate.

He plans to confer with US Secretary of State James Baker on how best to improve the social and cultural status of US service personnel and their families in Germany.

First and foremost he would like to see German language-teaching lent every encouragement.

A new concept for public relations work by Bonn in the United States is due for discussion at the Foreign Office. A more direct approach to the general public, direct dialogue with ordinary Americans, is to be sought.

One fact must certainly not be overlooked. It is that by the year 2010 the majority of US citizens will no longer be of European extraction.

"That," Professor Weidenfeld says, "will naturally be accompanied by orientation problems.

Günter Kläer

(Allgemeine Zeitung, Mainz, 2 March 1989)

The German Tribune

Friedrich Reinecke Verlag GmbH, 3-4 Hartwicusstrasse, D-2000 Hamburg 76, Tel.: 22 85 1, Telex: 02-14733.
Editor-in-chief: Otto Heinz. Editor: Alexander Anthony. English language sub-editor: Simon Burnett. — Distribution manager: Georgine Picone.
Published weekly with the exception of the second week in January, the second week in April, the third week in September and the third week in November.
Advertising rates list No. 16
Annual subscription DM 45
Printed by CW Niemeyer-Druck, Hameln
Distributed in the USA by: MASS MAILINGS, Inc., 540 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.
Postmaster: send change of address to The German Tribune % MASS MAILINGS.
Articles in THE GERMAN TRIBUNE are translated from the original text and published by agreement with leading newspapers in the Federal Republic of Germany.
In all correspondence please quote your subscription number which appears on the wrapper, between asterisks, above your address.

■ HOME AFFAIRS

Christian Democrats' post mortems begin after another election setback

It is ages since leading Christian Democrats were as taciturn as they were on the morning after the heavy losses they suffered at the polls in local government elections in Hesse and, in particular, Frankfurt.

The results were so depressing that they were virtually at a loss for words.

Labour Minister Norbert Blüm, who is usually never at a loss for a snappy comment, steered well clear of the waiting cameramen in the lobby of the Konrad-Adenauer-Haus, the CDU's head office in Bonn.

Wolfgang Schäuble, Minister of State at the Chancellor's Office, made a quick detour and slipped in through the rear entrance as soon as he saw the waiting microphones.

No-one wanted to rouse party leader Helmut Kohl's ire by a premature and probably ill-advised turn of phrase.

Premier Walter Wallmann, the Hesse CDU leader, was visibly shocked yet prepared to comment.

The Christian Democrats, he somewhat agonisingly said, must now "stand firm and work hard."

They may have been prepared on the quiet for further losses after their poor performance in Berlin at the end of January, but CDU leaders in Bonn showed even greater signs of shock than might have been expected.

A number of them had been hoping against hope that the forthright way in *which* Berlin SPD leader Walter Momper had agreed to coalition terms with the Alternative List might have the requisite deterrent effect on Hesse voters.

That was certainly how the Bavarian CSU viewed the situation, feeling that Christian Democrats must only show clear signs of a sound right(-wing) outlook to dispel doubts and ensure a heavy turnout of voters.

The turnout was fine: 78.1 per cent in urban and 79.2 per cent in rural areas.

But CDU head office must have been most upset that voters the Hesse CDU under Alfred Dregger had weaned away from the SPD so misunderstood the CDU's election manifesto this time.

On more than one occasion CDU leader Helmut Kohl and CDU general secretary Heiner Geissler had announced that the right-wing NPD, reduced to insignificance, was as dead as the dodo — due to their domestic policies.

To their horror they now find that not only the NPD but also the Republicans, another right-wing party led by Bavarian Franz Schönhuber, are promptly showing the Free Democrats a clean pair of heels wherever they stand — at the first time of asking.

This was a turn of events not even Herr Geissler had foreseen.

Stated opponents of the CDU general secretary's markedly right-wing approach were naturally no less upset.

A man like the head of the CDU small businessmen's association and outgoing Berlin Economic Affairs Senator, Elmar Pieroth, who plans to advise Chancellor Kohl to clearly change his policy, is no longer sure whether the party's abysmal showing at the polls in Hesse can be dismissed as a mere warning shot.

"It must definitely not turn out to have been a coup de grace," he says, bearing in mind the widespread feeling



of perplexity within CDU ranks. Yet he too had no solution to suggest on the "morning after."

Kohl, Wallmann and Geissler are at least agreed on one point, that it is no longer enough to blame the Hesse CDU or Mayor Brück of Frankfurt.

There would be no point in attaching local blame to what is so clearly a widespread trend and turning-point for which the CDU/CSU as a whole must bear the blame.

Support for the political centre seems, at least potentially, to be wasting away, and the SPD is equally affected by the trend away from the two major parties.

Christian Democrat Bernhard Vogel, ex-Premier of the Rhineland-Palatinate, says this ground can only be regained if the CDU/CSU does all it can to regain its inner credibility.

Dr Vogel, who is now head of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, sees the Hesse election results as further proof that voters can no longer be hoodwinked, that they have a "sixth sense" to tell them when a party is heading off course.

Helmut Kohl is keen to close the credibility gap. After the morning-after meeting of the CDU leadership he said that in view of the "very serious situation" he planned to "draw his conclusions" without delay — and not just in relation to government policy priorities.

He is now prepared to give specific consideration to a reshuffle, but it is hard to see how he can get it all over with before the next election deadlines.

The only definite point is his stated intention of giving housing a shot in the arm. He plans to do so retroactively and at some expense, yet without upsetting the balance of Bonn government finances.

He can now be sure to have the backing of the Free Democrats on this point; they are shivering on board the same boat as the CDU.

Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg will hardly dare to refuse cash to bail out the Bonn coalition. Yet it is hard to believe that the short-term result will be a nationwide swing of the pendulum in the CDU/CSU's favour.

Doubts are evidently gnawing at even imperturbable Chancellor Kohl's self-confidence. He has volunteered the information that time is growing increasingly short for him and his government.

In 46 months, he says, the single European market will be set up, and the Federal Republic must not be allowed to grow unfit to face the future.

Meanwhile the CDU/CSU faces its next test at the polls on 18 June, when local government elections will be held is the Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saar and elections to the European Parliament will be held nationwide. This deadline — and the election results — now assumes a new dimension in terms of both domestic and foreign affairs.

Helmut Kohl in Bonn and Walter Wallmann in Hesse are not denying that it is primarily for the CDU/CSU to stem the tide of growing support for right-wing extremists.

With the year 2000 none too distant no Bonn head of government can afford to have two extreme right-wing parties both with double-digit potential support.

The xenophobia to which that might lend expression could prove "fatal" for a country in the Federal Republic's position, the Chancellor admits.

The Christian Democrats are unlikely to succeed in changing this state of affairs as long as the CDU and the CSU are so at odds over the inferences to be drawn as CDU general secretary Heiner Geissler and CSU Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann were after the Hesse elections.

Herr Geissler had no difficulty in identifying Herr Zimmermann as the culprit. On the eve of the Hesse elections parliamentary state secretary Carl-Dieter Spranger of the Interior Ministry had condemned the German bishops yet failed to streamline the procedures used for asylum applicants at Zirndorf, the reception centre near Nuremberg.

Herr Zimmermann promptly returned the compliment, saying Herr Geissler was no able to find his way around the "system of coordinates."

He evidently needed even more blows of the kind suffered by the CDU in Berlin and Hesse before he grasped the situation.

Eghard Mörbitz

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 14 March 1989)

Free Democrats parked at the crossroads

They may be doing their best not to hold their strategy debate in public, but the Free Democrats are no less nervous than the Christian Democrats after their showing at the polls in Berlin.

Can they wave goodbye to the good old days when they were the tail that wagged the dog, a small party whose support was needed to form a majority government?

An even gloomier prospect is that of sharing the decline in support for Chancellor Kohl's CDU in Schleswig-Holstein, Berlin and elsewhere.

There is a debate within the FDP whether the choice of Count Lambsdorff as party leader was the right one.

As society sets out in motion, issues change, with soft options gaining prevalence over hard ones, economic issues appearing less predominant and the caravans busy regrouping, gloom looms on the horizon for the undecided fellow-travellers of the CDU/CSU.

FDP stalwart Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher is in hospital for an operation and will be out of action for some time. He will need to take it easy for a while if he is to retain the upper hand in foreign affairs.

Count Lambsdorff may be at the ready, and firmly in control, but he has failed to forestall initial queries as to his ability to hold his own in the Bonn coalition.

After strong initial words he has backed down more than once. It is far from easy to give the Liberals a facelift after years of relative mediocrity under Herr Bangemann without plunging the Bonn coalition into further panic.

For Count Lambsdorff, as for previous FDP leaders, the way ahead seems to be a maze he must successfully negotiate if he is not to have been the Free Democrats' last leader.

In the quest for a sense of direction that was lost after their showing at the polls in Berlin, if not earlier, the Free Democrats can no longer deny that their two leaders are pulling in different directions.

That isn't to say that Count Lambsdorff might not be capable of realising where his interest lay and realigning overnight, as it were. But, most unlike Herr Genscher, he has yet to prepare for what may well be a far from distant contingency.

He stands for a school of thought within the FDP that encourages the CDU/CSU to do the splits and appeal to voters on the far right of the political spectrum.

His aim seems to be to follow at a clear distance and enlist the support of the Liberal bourgeoisie, which might just be enough to enable the present Bonn coalition to retain its majority in next year's general election.

Keen not to upset conservative supporters, Count Lambsdorff denies that the FDP has an increasing amount in common with the SPD. But he, like Chancellor Kohl, makes the serious mistake of trying to scare voters with the teased-out spectre of SPD-Green coalition chaos. He ought to feel he has better things to do than to back propaganda of this kind. If he wants to drive a wedge between the SPD and the Alternatives he will certainly need to set about it more skilfully.

Herr Genscher stands for a school of thought that advises the FDP to state its case in a multi-party society more independently of the two major parties.

The FDP leader in the Bonn Cabinet feels the coalition with the CDU/CSU in Bonn will be at the end of the road once the "basic axis" of German politics is "bent" from the Liberal viewpoint.

A coalition to which the FDP is a party must, Herr Genscher says, be a coalition of the centre. He feels the CDU/CSU is drifting to the right, whereas the SPD is not (!) drifting to the left in Berlin.

In Berlin, he argues, the Social Democrats are responsibly handling the voters' mandate in a bid to nudge the Alternatives toward the centre.

Are Lambsdorff and Genscher at least agreed on foreign and security policy priorities?

Helmut Kohl is agreed to have told Herr Genscher in a recent round of coalition talks: "If I had known you wanted a third zero solution there wouldn't have been a coalition with the FDP in 1982."

Herr Genscher did not reply, as was first reported: "Say that again in the presence of Count Lambsdorff." Count Lambsdorff was present, as Herr Genscher replied: "A significant statement. Please say it again slowly."

For him the "modernisation" of short-range missiles is a make-or-break

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■ THE NATION

Worries about what is happening in Berlin

The writer of this article, Shepard Stone, was director of the Aspen Institute, Berlin, from 1974 to 1988. He now teaches at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, in Cambridge, Mass.

You don't need to be either a German or born on the River Spree to feel yourself to be a "Berliner." Yet nowadays we "Berliners" outside Berlin are having trouble. Just what is going on in the city?

Berlin is not the only city with serious problems. Job worries and unemployment, housing shortage, social grievances, narcotics, the influx of social outsiders and environmental destruction are universal phenomena.

Politicians everywhere are having to seek solutions or run the risk of being made jobless themselves at the next elections.

Yet in New York, Paris and London the quest for solutions is still undertaken within the framework of reality. Experience has shown that despite the shortcomings of the democratic system there is none better.

Washington is not worried but somewhat concerned about developments in Berlin. No-one yet knows what significance the SPD-Green coalition will have for Berlin and for the Federal Republic.

US government officials are more worried than has so far been noted by public opinion about the Republicans, the extreme right-wing party that polled over seven per cent in the 29 January elections to the Berlin House of Representatives.

Sixteen years ago another party, the NPD, originating — like the Republicans — in Munich, roused similar emotions.

In Berlin and in the Federal Republic there are clear signs of a German peculiarity. Every 40 or 50 years the German soul begins to palpitate. Dreams and emotions, mixed with hatred of outsiders, encourage a flight into uncertainty.

That would not be so important if it were merely a German domestic matter, but opinion in other countries is sensitive on this point.

Wherever foreign policy is made or discussed in America — in Washington, among academics, journalists or in the business community — there are many people who despite occasional criticism admire the Federal Republic and Berlin.

They are not just impressed by Germany's economic success story. Many also hold the democratic institutions, the welfare system and freedom of the press in the Federal Republic in high esteem.

They see West Germany as a crucial partner in the Western community. And some, if not all, realise that Bonn is bound, on account of the country's geographical location and the division of Germany and Berlin, to be keen on special relations with the Soviet Union and with Eastern Europe.

Americans also know that most Germans today were not born until after the Hitler era and are not to blame for Nazi crimes.

Yet they would like to see Germans a little more aware of their history, and that is why there is a sense of upset about a number of tendencies at both ends of the political spectrum.

There are felt to be clear signs, in Berlin and in the Federal Republic, that foreigners and applicants for asylum are being cast in the role of scapegoats and whipping boys for German domestic problems — just as Hitler did with the Jews.

Nevertheless, even "Berliners" living outside Berlin are convinced that the city will cope with the present crisis, hopefully upholding the principles on which its existence is based:

— the monopoly of power enjoyed by the state;

— commitment to the status of Berlin and to the Allied presence;

— maintenance of legal unity with the Federal Republic.

These principles underscore the fact that Berlin's future is an international and not a local concern.

Hitler, whose birth centenary will hopefully not be celebrated by anyone this year, is to blame for the future of Berlin not being a matter for Berliners and other Germans alone but for Europeans, Russians and Americans.

It is important for the people of Berlin to quietly reconsider their position and their future, especially in an era of which the keynote is likely to be greater East-West detente but fresh tension within Eastern Europe.

The Berliners and their politicians could benefit from the objective work on the future of the city at Berlin research facilities such as the Aspen Institute.

Forty-five years after the war there are naturally a number of status rights which are outdated and ought to be scrapped by the Western Allies, but in principle the Allied presence in Berlin is essential for the security and democratic future of the city, especially in today's complex East-West situation.

The West too unquestionably has interests of its own in Berlin, but these relations may well change in the decades to come.

Such changes must be worked out quietly and in full awareness of common interests. Adventurous flights of fancy are something the world has in plenty.

Berlin is on the border between East and West. That is why it must continue to be an international city. It has many op-



portunities: as an East-West trade turntable, as a cultural magnet (which it was in the 1920s), and as an open city in which everything can be attempted, much can be dismissed and much done to make it one of the glories of Europe again.

That calls for Berlin politicians of the stature of Ernst Reuter, Willy Brandt or Richard von Weizsäcker, politicians with ideas and the determination to put them into practice.

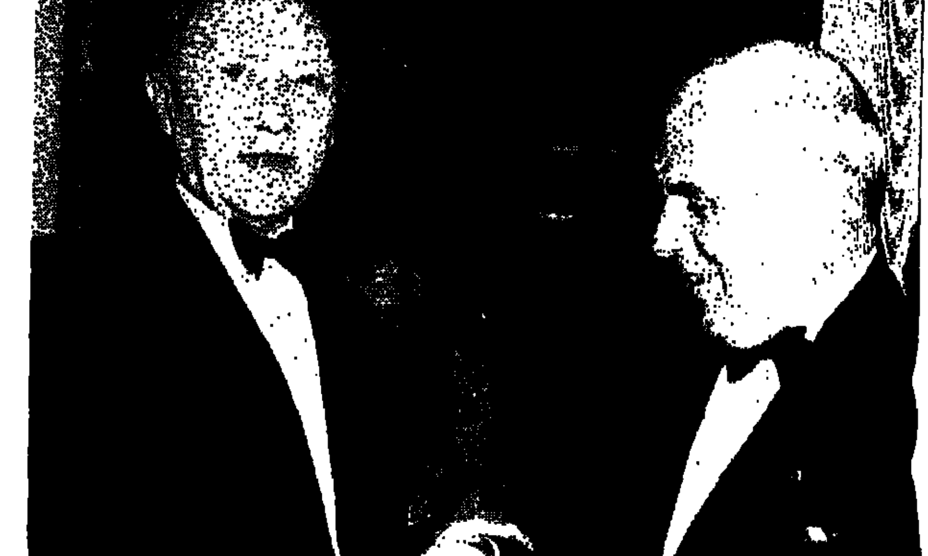
It calls for private circles that don't just run to the Senate and criticise it but have the backbone to grasp the initiative themselves. It calls for a people of Berlin with the courage, the humour and the stamina of the post-war and blockade era.

Can Berlin ever be anything other than an open, democratic, international city? Every city depends on an influx of fresh blood. In the past Berlin has often shown how Huguenots, Jews, Silesians, East Prussians, other Germans, Russians and Americans can be made into Berliners.

For the sake of the city's well-being this must continue to be the case.

Shepard Stone

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 17 March 1989)



Farewell party. Chancellor Adenauer (left) says goodbye to high commissioner McCloy in 1952. (Photo: dpa)

John J. McCloy, 'Godfather of the new Germany', dies

Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker called John J. McCloy, who has died in Stamford, Connecticut, aged 93, a "godfather of the new Germany."

He certainly made his mark on the Federal Republic's emergence from the ruins of the post-war period.

McCloy was a self-made man and owed his rise to influence as a senior government official and a banker to hard work.

His father died when he was young. His mother, who was of German extraction, earned the family's living as a laundress and a nurse.

McCloy worked his way through college, where he read law, as a waiter and tutor. After serving in France in the First World War he joined a New York firm of attorneys.

In the 1930s he achieved spectacular success as an attorney by solving up a wartime sabotage case and making a $26m damages claim against the German Reich stick.

Defence Secretary Stimson was impressed and took him on in 1939 as a counter-espionage expert at the Pentagon.

From 1941 to 1945 he was under-secretary in charge of the lease-lend programme for America's allies.

In 1945 he arrived in Germany with the occupying forces as head of the Civil Affairs Division.

His first direct intervention in the course of events was to prevent the destruction of Rothenburg ob der Tauber when the advancing US forces encountered Wehrmacht resistance in the picturesque mediaeval town.

He was president of the World Bank for two years, then sent back to Germany by President Truman as US high commissioner and military governor.

He came back at a crucial juncture in the post-war period. The Soviet blockade of Berlin had just been abandoned in the face of Western Allied determination and the staying power of the people of Berlin.

A new political future needed to be mapped out for the former Reich capital and the emerging Federal Republic of Germany.

That could only be successfully accomplished jointly by the Germans and the Western Allies — America, Britain and France.

McCloy set about this task with a keen sense of commitment. In his quiet, good-humoured manner he succeeded in both looking after US interests and supporting the young German democracy.

Bonn politicians, first and foremost Konrad Adenauer, soon sensed that they could talk sense with McCloy and rely on him to understand and appreciate their problems.

A typical occasion was the first meeting between McCloy and Adenauer after the latter's election as Federal Chancellor.

McCloy recalled it as follows: "It was a cold, wet day, when I was told that Chancellor Adenauer had arrived. I was still at a meeting and not yet ready to talk.

"When I was, I was told that the Chancellor refused to come in. I went oput of the door, looked at him and said: 'I know how you feel. It must be like Canossa for you.'

"Adenauer looked amazed. He was surprised that an American knew enough about European history to appreciate what Canossa stood for. My remark had broken the ice. He came in and it was the beginning of a long friendship."

The Americans, who were initially based in the old IG Farben head office in Frankfurt, then moved to the new US embassy building in Bonn, were confident under McCloy that the new German state would develop satisfactorily.

By 1952 McCloy had provided for $1bn in Marshall Aid to be invested in the Federal Republic.

He was one of the first to see the need for a German defence contribution in a joint Western framework. He played a leading role in the framing and signing of the May 1952 treaty between Bonn and the Western Allies.

There were two keynotes to McCloy's political views in this period: the need to restore German unity and solidarity with Berlin as a "symbol of freedom for the whole world."

When he returned to America in July 1952 he left behind a pledge: "A major aim of American policy is to see the German people reunited, and we will do everything we can to ensure that it is."

John J. McCloy, a freeman of Berlin, remained true to this pledge in many functions in later life.

Bernt Conrad

(Die Welt, Bonn, 13 March 1989)

■ PERSPECTIVE

The man on the Clapham omnibus is far from raising a cheer for Europe

In the 3/89 supplement to the Bonn weekly newspaper *Das Parlament* Angelika Volle outlines "Great Britain's transition from a reluctant outsider to an awkward partner in the European Community."

Why do the British have such difficulty in coming to terms with the Continent, of which the United Kingdom forms a part (of what else, when all is said and done?).

Frau Volle concludes that ties between Whitehall and the European Community bear the hallmark of a trauma with regard to the loss of British sovereignty.

The vision of a European Union, pursued with a great deal of idealism by Continental politicians, is not shared by the pragmatic British, who see the common internal market, an economic-only community, as the final objective of European integration.

The Thatcher government has promoted the development of the European Community since 1984 with this aim, and no other, in mind.

That is why Mrs Thatcher, asked last year whether she could imagine most social and economic decisions ever being transferred to Brussels, frankly said she could in no circumstances imagine any such thing.

Europe consisted of different countries that cooperated. No less, but no more.

Does British public opinion take a more favourable view of Europe than the British government? Frau Volle says all British Cabinets since 1973, when Britain joined the Community, have been a failure.

They have been so inasmuch as they have failed to do much to brief public opinion on the importance of the Community. Much remains to be done before the man on the Clapham omnibus grows at all inquisitive, let alone enthusiastic, about Europe.

How is one to account for this insular indifference and complacency? Is this mistaken imperturbability part of a much more far-reaching British crisis?

In the 3/89 issue of the *Historische Zeitschrift* Wolfgang Krieger of Munich University deals with "The British Crisis in Historical Perspective."

Over 10 years ago, he writes, US and West European social scientists began to discuss whether the Western democracies were growing ungovernable.



"In that debate German crisis consciousness was much more marked than British," he writes, "even though statistical data showed the crisis to be much more deep-seated in Britain than in the Federal Republic.

"In specialist discussions German observers most worriedly referred to the vale of tears of British unemployment, strikes, inflation, current account deficits, mass conflicts and the civil war in Northern Ireland, while a number of British colleagues dismissed this as typically German pessimism.

"There was no such thing as a crisis of the British state. The country was as stable as ever. All that could be said was that the British economy had grown a little more slowly than the French and German economies, but this was not a recent phenomenon, dating back to the late 19th century."

In the meantime, Krieger writes, three points have become clear.

First, there is now a widespread academic debate in Great Britain about the "British disease."

Second, it was clear that no acute political crisis was in evidence on the other side of the Channel.

Third, however, far-reaching, long-term shortcomings of Britain's economic performance were apparent.

Until the 1950s Britain's per capita GNP ranked among the highest in industrialised Western Europe.

In the early 1980s, however, the British GNP was only half Germany's. The same was true of British productivity, which was only a little over half Germany's. "The mother country of industrialisation, with an empire that spanned the globe only a few decades ago, is now trailing all comparable industrialised countries, including Italy."

Despite North Sea oil and market economic initiatives by the Thatcher government there were no signs of whether and when Britain might regain lost ground.

The British crisis lay deeply rooted in British society; it was an "epoch-making fissure in the country's historic development" and considerably influenced the way the British saw themselves today.

Where did the British crisis originate? Is it a result of decolonialisation, of world market changes, of competition? Or are the trade unions, and peculiarities of the British labour force, to blame?

Krieger writes that the Thatcher government has demonstrated how overestimated trade union power in Britain used to be. He seems to feel the British mentality accounts for the present crisis.

The ideal of the nobility and the middle class alike was the gentleman, a man well-versed in the glories of Ancient Greece and Rome and with a mind uncluttered by such mundane matters as science or engineering.

A mistaken political consciousness, a misjudgement of the external framework conditions of the Reich, was the undoing of the Germans after 1890.

In the 1/89 issue of the *Historische Zeitschrift* Erlangen historian Gregor Schöllgen deals with the lack of judgement or sense of proportion of the leaders of the day and with the "desire for international repute" they shared with most German contemporaries.

Germany's rise from great power to world power status was felt to be inevitable, and certainly essential.

The motive of national prestige or, put another way, of equal rights — the bid to secure for the German Reich an "appropriate status and reputation" in the European system of states and the world of those days — was to prove fateful.

The Germans, Schöllgen writes, pursued their world affairs on a fairly modest scale when compared with the extensive conquests of Britain or France.

But viewed from Britain or France they appeared threateningly persistent.

The Germans misled themselves about the impression they made. They were indignant at being said to be dangerous.

How was this self-delusion possible? In brief, because they tended, particularly in foreign affairs, to dream, to succumb to wishful thinking, to pursue emotional policies rather than to rely on common sense and a calm, level-headed view of the situation.

That was the case under Kaiser Wilhelm. It recurred under the Führer.

After a conversation with Hitler, who in many ways was very typical of his fellow-countrymen, Wilhelm Simpfendörfer noted in 1932 that:

"My overall impression is that Hitler was personally pleasant throughout the conversation, apart from a pose he at times adopted.

"But Hitler as a politician had a devastating effect on me: vague, unclear, lacking in *Realpolitik* vision and with no clearly outlined target.

"He feels himself to be a political prophet who paints certain visions of the future in enthusiastic abandon."

Simpfendörfer's contemporary appraisal is reprinted in the 1/89 issue of the *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*. It makes upsetting reading.

We have a new breed of political prophets today with vague ideas and lacking in appreciation of the framework conditions of German policy yet filled with enthusiasm and emotion, and they are fast growing in number.

Arnulf Baring

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 15 March 1989)

Continued from page 1

tra-German circumstances. It remains to be seen whether the long-overdue change of generations, especially at the top in the GDR, will lead to greater inner sovereignty and social freedom.

Protest is justified and necessary when people, are injured or killed at the Berlin Wall or along the intra-German border.

Yet it is equally true that greater freedom of travel and heed for human rights can only be accomplished with the East Berlin government and not against its will.

The patient policy of interest-balancing and cautious urging has proved best. Those who feel the time has come to thump the table will only trigger a standstill or a relapse, and harm those they feel they are helping, ordinary people.

Carl-Christian Kaiser

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 17 March 1989)

Surprising lack of controversy at Königswinter

To the surprise of all concerned, controversy was not the keynote of the 39th round of Anglo-German talks in Königswinter, near Bonn.

The emphasis was on a joint approach to the future of Europe.

Karl-Günther von Hase, president of the "Deutsch-Englische Gesellschaft" and long-serving German ambassador to London, referred in his opening remarks to clouds that had overcast the otherwise largely blue skies of Anglo-German relations for some time.

The annual gathering, held alternately in Königswinter and Cambridge, is an informal discussion forum for politicians, academics, businessmen and publicists.

Outlining the issues assigned to the four working parties, Herr von Hase said the subject of this year's conference, "A Future for Europe," was well suited for clarification and elucidation.

Two days and 20 hours of debate later, Sir Oliver Wright, a former British ambassador to Bonn, arrived at a conclusion that surprised even him.

For the first time in the history of the Königswinter conferences, he said, synonymous as they were with free debate, the two countries had, as he put it, absorbed themselves in Europe.

Where differences in viewpoint had arisen, which was seldom the case, they had not really been national differences.

Unanimity predominated on issues ranging from assessing the prospects for perestroika and reform in Eastern Europe to the British proposal for a "Europeanisation of Ostpolitik."

A further pointer to Anglo-German consensus within Europe was that no mention was made of the economic challenge to the European Community by the United States and Japan.

Views varied on two issues only, both of which were discussed in detail.

While the Germans stressed the need for a central bank of issue for the European Community and repeatedly advocated a European currency union, the British were more reserved, saying the time was not yet ripe.

Views also differed on Austria's bid to join the European Community. The British were strictly opposed to the idea, and a German speaker also warned of the consequences for Nato.

The accession of a neutral country would mean that security policy had to be realigned.

There were no differences in viewpoint on the sovereignty of individual states, said German journalist Robert Leicht, reporting on the proceedings of his working party.

In keeping with the agreed rules of the conference he named no names, merely outlining views that had been voiced.

If Mrs Thatcher had been a member of his working party, he felt, she would never have made her Bruges speech. No-one had advocated dissolution of the nation-state.

Constantly recurring points included the lack of a perceptible link between political decisions and personal life, the failure so far to convince people of the need for a united Europe, and the call for a "Europe of efficiency but warmheartedness."

Greater attention was in future to be paid to environmental protection and the social dimension.

Only an hour was allocated to the *Historikerstreit*, or dispute between German historians over the Third Reich. It was just enough for two statements and two speeches — even though several of the historians in question were present.

More than enough suggestions were made for subjects to discuss at next year's 40th anniversary conference in Cambridge.

Chancellor Kohl and Mrs Thatcher both plan to attend and are considering combining it with their regular consultations.

Regina Krieger

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 13 March 1989)

■ EUROPE 1992

A single European currency 'would tend to increase trade imbalances'

The author of this article is Joachim Starbatty, Professor of Economics at Tübingen University.

Ten years ago, in March 1979, the European Monetary System (EMS) first saw the light of day. It was the brainchild of French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing and the Federal Republic's Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

The EMS is more than an extension of the "Currency Snake," with more participants, which had been in operation until then.

The EMS included many more qualitative elements:

- The creation of a basket currency unit, the Ecu: the charm of this creation is firstly that it is the abbreviation of the English expression, European Currency Unit, and it recalls the small French coin minted by Philip 'Le Bel' (1268-1314), the ecu, and thirdly, it is geared to the Federal Republic's monetary policy.
- The Ecu is used in the settlement of balances between central banks and plays a special role on the private investor market — mainly among European Community member states with restricted movements of capital.
- Devaluations and revaluations take place as a concerted effort; this results in a Community-based exchange rate.
- The volume of short- and medium-term financial support has been considerably increased.

The mechaneis of the EMS (divergence thresholds, divergence indicators, balanced intervention and bilateral parity grids) seem at first so complicated that the joke does the rounds that three experts could understand it, but they cannot explain it: three other experts could explain it, but they cannot understand it.

However central and commercial banks have worked with the system without any trouble.

The main agreement of the EMS was signed by the presidents of European central banks: this involves the intervention on currency markets to stabilise the EMS.

This raises the question: to what do the central banks give priority in cases of conflict, internal or external economic stabilisation?

Otmar Emminger, the now deceased president of the Bundesbank, pointed out that in cases of conflict the Bundresbank had to adhere to its legal responsibilities.

He maintained that any other interpretation of the central bank agreement would result in the loss of the Bank's autonomy, through the backdoor as it were.

In view of the overrun on monetary growth targets over the past few years and an inflation rate which is obviously increasing, it seems the right moment to remind Bundesbank, politicians and the general public of the Bundesbank's legal responsibility to safeguard the currency.

One of the successes of the EMS is that so far no member has pulled out of it, and that it is "an island of stability in a sea of exchange rate turbulence," as an expert recently put it. Exchange rates have remained unaltered over the past two years.

There has, of course, been some gnashing of teeth within the EMS. President Mitterrand's experiment at the beginning of the 1980s, to modernise French industry via primitive Keynesianism and the increased production of socialist-policy inspired unsalable articles, which would in any case have reduced French industry's competitivity but within the context of the EMS they would have become "fatal" in the long-term.

When there was a change of government in Bonn in 1982 the road to be taken was towards stability, and it was clear that either the French would have to withdraw from the EMS or gear their policies to the new facts of foreign trade.

There was some hard talking between the then French Economic Affairs Minister, Jacques Delors, and his Federal Republic counterpart, Gerhard Soltenberg, at a crucial meeting in early 1983, according to officials closely concerned.

Paris then gave way. Since then socialists in France have pursued free-market policies.

Close observers of the French political scene suspect that Mitterrand was looking for confrontation in Brussels so as not to have to admit that the failure of the socialist experiment had forced his government to change course.

Nevertheless everyone concedes that membership of the EMS has maintained discipline. A member must adjust his policies to those that are predominant at the time or adjust currency parities to the changing facts.

Many governments fight shy of the latter, for that would be an admission of the failure of their policies. Such a step could be taken or contemplated only with a change of government or after an election.

If individual EMS members are to gear their monetary and finance policies to a dominant exchange rate, it is decisive which currency dominates. At present it is the deutschemark.

The reasons for this are the Federal Republic's economic potential, the high foreign trade surplus and the de facto currency union between the Federal Republic, Austria and Switzerland.

The deutschemark is seen as playing an anchoring role, giving the EMS stability. This role of the deutschemark in the EMS has grown more and more.

The dominance of the deutschemark in the European Community is not necessarily a matter for rejoicing.

In Brussels and the capitals of the other EC member states there are com-

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

plaints made about the want of symmetry in the distribution of burdens. The Bundesbank pursues a policy which it believes is the correct one.

But this forces other countries with weak currencies to adopt policies, which they would not pursue if they did not have to show consideration.

If it were a matter of following their own economic ideas they would tend to give less importance to monetary and financial policies geared to stability. They might have in mind that they could do more for employment or for more social welfare.

Here we are not concerned with whether this attitude is right or wrong: what is important is the member states in the EMS see the situation in this way.

For them the creation of a joint central bank means they have the chance to introduce their ideas about the right monetary course and the distribution of burdens into common decision-making and to put this to the vote.

At the present they see the situation as sink or swim: adjust your policies or devalue.

When these countries talk about a "common central bank" they also mean the severing of the EMS anchor at the point which the Bundesbank believes is right.

One has to have sympathy for such an attitude. Every country, which regards the policies of another country as a burden, would want to jettison these policies.

Anyone who assumes these countries are ready to bear this burden, when it is given the label "European," is poorly informed about the way politics operate.

Naturally EMS members try to retain some economic room for manoeuvre for themselves, despite the domination of the deutschemark. This is most obvious in the cross-frontier movement of goods.

The Federal Republic has constantly recorded surpluses in trade with its EMS partners, which could be reduced to some extent by concerted devaluations or revalutations.

Over the past few years this imbalance has become more marked. In 1983 the West German economy obtained almost 39 per cent of its total trade surplus in trade with European Community states; last year 63 per cent of the surplus was in trade with EC partners.

This means that the relative stable exchange rate was obtained at the price of a considerable imbalance in trade. Because the others hold still, our currency is undervalued and our exports are correspondingly subsidised. A powerful need for adjustment has accumulated here.

The imbalance in trade would be accentuated by the establishment of the single European market since, from an economic point of view, this will amount to an intensification of competion.

The barriers hindering access to competitors from other EC countries will be lower, if they are not done away with altogether.

Uncompetitive regions will have to swallow limitations on growth and employment. If they cannot make up for the difference in productivity by *devaluation*, there will be a flight of capital and a drain on their best workers, so that the polarisation tendency will be accentuated.

As a countermove purchasing power will have to be channelled back by increasing the various regional funds.

There will then be those who are unhappy because they do not want to be the recipients of charity handouts.

The others will not rid themselves of the feeling that their country is being regarded as a cow, which can always be milked.

This scenario is not that of a defeatist European, but the outline of a proposal made by French politicians, allegedly "recycling of regional production surpluses."

In economics, as in politics, the principle applies that energies should not be dissipated but concentrated. The single European market is a challenge of the sort to which politicial attention of all sorts must be given.

It is not a question that if this attempt falters then another could be tried. An irretrievable chance would be wasted.

Many in Brussels know from a reading of the Cecchini report that the single European market will not automatically have positive results: there will be countries, industrial sectors and many individual companies which will be hit by the intensification of competition.

If the exchange rate parameters are no longer there for the purpose of increasing national competitivity, because there are demands for a common currency, then the risks will be increased in the course of establishing a single European market.

If the members of the EMS regard policies geared towards stability as onerous why then impose on all countries a common currency if they are prepared to tolerate more inflation?

Then the gauge of displeasure increases: some want the currency arrangement to be too broad, others too narrow.

Industry is not geared to a single currency. Invoicing is done either in the national currency or covered by dealing in futures.

Incidentally for some time now there has been a means of payment for cross-frontier trade, which is accepted everywhere when selling wine or whatever in neighbouring countries: the plastic credit card.

Joseph Alois Schrumpeter (1883-1950) once said that one could tell a people's cash value from the wood they were carved from. Why in all the world does anyone want to ordain on the nations of Europe a common monetary system?

Joachim Starbatty

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 10 March 1989)

The European Currency Unit (Ecu)

1 Ecu = DM2.08

One Ecu comprises

0.719 Marks

in per cent

34.9

1 ECU

0.14 Lux Francs

0.3

11.9

0.00878 Esc.

0.8

1.15 Drachma

8.7

3.71 Bel. francs

1.1

0.00871 Ir. punts

11.0

0.256 Gilders

9.4

140 Lire

2.8

0.219 Dan. Kroner

19.0

1.31 French francs

Figures at beginning of 1987 (rounded off figures do not add up to 100%)

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■ COMPUTER FAIR

More visitors than ever, but some key people are staying away



The organisers of the Cebit computer fair in Hanover no longer have the least doubt that this year's spectacular will break all previous records.

Attendance at the half-way mark was a sure sign of success. The 160,000 people who passed the turnstiles at the weekend brought the number of visitors to over 330,000, making a final 500,000-plus more than likely.

So Cebit has certainly proved a crowd-puller, and most of the nearly 3,200 exhibitors from 37 countries said, on first asking, they were satisfied.

Trade associations say the atmosphere at Cebit stands is good, with visitors highly qualified and an increasing number from abroad.

These interim findings would suggest that all is bright and beautiful, much as Chancellor Kohl would like to feel.

At the opening ceremony of a trade fair billed as the World Centre of Office, Information and Telecom Technology he called on entrepreneurs to abandon their restraint and say they were doing well (always assuming that to be the case).

Where Cebit is concerned that is only partly true. Increasing criticism of the "No. 1 trade event" is being voiced.

The fair organisers are delighted with the attendance figures. Exhibitors are not, or inevitably less so.

Trade fairs cost money, and the expense must pay dividends. Exhibitors evaluate a fair's success mainly in terms of the following criteria:

— the number of new trade contacts made;

— the number of talks held with trade visitors;

— and the business generated as a result.

They see them in this order of importance and, at least in certain sectors exhibited at Cebit, the Hanover fair no longer seems to live up to exhibitors' expectations.

A substantial number of key people in data processing and informatics are said no longer to feel paying Cebit a regular visit is essential.

The criticism of Cebit voiced by these "no-shows" ranges from badly arranged and oversized to wrongly conceived. The "stay-aways" dislike the rush and tumble and the surfeit of razzmatazz.

The expense, they say, is no longer justified by the amount of qualified information realistically available to visitors.

Assistance with investment decisions and information for day-to-day use are more readily available in other ways. All too often the person they need to consult is not there at the Cebit stand.

Specific days, they feel, should be reserved for trade visitors — so as to preserve at least in part Cebit's role as a trade fair.

Exhibitors try to offset these difficulties by means of a special approach to the trade visitor. Large firms send out early invitations to customers and potential customers — and say it pays to do so.

A further shortcoming of this year's Cebit was that no real innovations were unveiled. The few exceptions served only to prove the rule.

Most products on show were based on existing models; not because the trade has run out of innovative steam but in view of self-restraint with regard to innovations for which the Hanover fair deadline is simply too early.

They include the OS/2 operating system. The first programs based on the new standard are not expected to be available before the year's end.

Much the same is true of even faster microchips that are expected to give the personal computer market a shot in the arm. The premiere of a new generation of microprocessors is scheduled to be held in a few weeks' time.

Mainframe manufacturers' restraint is thus largely attributable to uncertainty about technical standards.

Yet the Hanover fair is still a pointer to trade trends, and networks are clearly the shape of things to come.

Information and communication systems already provide an opportunity of setting up local area networks not only within offices and works facilities; entire companies can be networked.

The Multinet network as exhibited at Cebit is a case in point. It demonstrates communication between over 30 manufacturers' hardware and software products.

Another instance of product compatibility regardless of manufacturer is the *trend toward manufacturing and office* automation logs that make communication between equipment made by different manufacturers possible. Networking of workplaces within a company, linking departments and entire divisions to a central information and communication system, is *making swift headway*. Networking of systems independently of individual companies is also on the increase. Few topics generated as much interest at Cebit as ISDN, short for Integrated Services Digital Network. Launched experimentally by the Bundespost in eight German cities, it will combine speech, pictures, data and permutations on all three. Relying mainly on digitalisation of the telecom infrastructure, it will not really be available all over Germany for several years, but industry is preparing for the ISDN era in a big way.

By 1993 ISDN services are scheduled to be available all over the country. Industry and the Bundespost then expect the first tidal wave of demand, especially as international agreements have already ensured ISDN services to other countries.

Four large groups will share the telecom network market. They are AT&T of America, Alcatel of France, Siemens of Germany and a Japanese consortium.

It remains to be seen who will make the running in user equipment — software, as it were.

New information and communication technology services such as *Bildschirmtext*, the German version of teletex, often find it hard to gain initial acceptance.

Dominik Schmidt

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 13 March 1989)

This device prints out a picture of the person at the other end of the picture-telephone line in just 10 seconds. (Photo: AP)

India shows it is catching the leaders up

Over half a million Indian programmers are beavering away at computer applications for very little money. In many cases there is a brisk overseas demand for their services.

An Indian specialist costs DM2,000 a month. A German specialist doing the same work costs at least eight times as much.

Indian computer companies, and software manufacturers in particular, are about to catch up with the international leaders.

Experts say Indian computer program manufacturers are extremely competent, largely unknown though they may be outside India.

The Cebit computer fair in Hanover may have remedied this state of affairs. India exhibited its computer know-how at this year's Cebit as the fair's first official partner country. Its aim was to make an international breakthrough.

The presentation of goods and services provided by over 60 hardware and software manufacturers was also envisaged as a milestone in cooperation between India and the Federal Republic of Germany (and other European countries).

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said, as Cebit got under way, that partnership was a major opportunity.

This comes as welcome news to German industry, which an insider now says sets greater store by the Indian market than by China, which it favoured only a few years ago.

India, a computer giant in the making, boasts a tremendous growth rate. Since the mid-1980s Indian high tech expansion has been in double figures.

Computer program exports are increasing by about 10 per cent a year and expected to be worth DM400m a year by next year.

Many leading international companies already use Indian software, which has progressed rapidly due to a large potential of skilled professionals and a low wage level.

The Indian government energetically encourages high tech development and offers foreign companies incentives to locate in India or cooperate with Indian firms.

Legislation favourable to industry, free trade zones for export-oriented enterprises, tax incentives and low-interest loans are examples of the facilities provided.

Encouragement is mainly given to export-oriented firms. India has foreign debts exceeding $50bn; it badly needs to earn foreign exchange.

Its Cebit presentation is thus aimed at finding new partners for the Indian computer trade and other industries. Opportunities and inclination are widespread in Germany, the Hanover trade fair organisers say.

India is said to be one of the few countries where the Germans are still in the lead.

In the first 10 months of 1988 the Indian government approved 140 joint ventures between German and Indian companies.

The Federal Republic thus led the field in this sector, followed by the United States, Great Britain and Japan.

Where foreign investment is concerned the Federal Republic ranks second in India, while it has long been India's fourth-largest trading partner.

New Delhi is worried about its deficit in trade with the Federal Republic, although the picture improved last year.

According to the Federal Statistics Office, Wiesbaden, India's deficit in trade with Germany declined last year from DM1.6bn to DM1.1bn.

So experts suspect India of planning to protect a growing number of domestic markets (a number of consumer markets are already protected) as soon as it has closed the technological gap *and thoroughly modernised* Indian industry.

Heinz Pollender of Deutsche Bank, which is active in India (with one branch in Bombay and another to be opened in New Delhi next month), advises German entrepreneurs interested in cooperation to invest directly in India.

At the Business with India stand Deutsche Bank enthusiastically advocated joint ventures and supplied information about India's complicated bureaucracy and foreign exchange regulations.

Herr Pollender said the time was still "ideal" for German investors to move into a fast-growing market in which the United States and Japan were also keenly interested.

Bernd Wittkowski

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 11 March 1989)

■ MONEY

The credit-card society is on the way

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

The days of banknotes, coins and cheques are soon to come to an end for the Federal Republic's 4,500 banks and savings banks.

If bankers have their way, this country will become a credit-card country: the most common means of payment will be the plastic card crossed by a dark magnetic stripe.

After some tough negotiating about concept and price the banks and their subsidiary, the Society for Payment Systems, have agreed to go into plastic credit cards. It is a form of payment not so widely used as in the USA, France and Britain, for instance.

There are about a million Eurocards in circulation here. The annual fee used to be DM100 but since February this has been cut by DM40.

A Golden Eurocard has been launched on the market as well, costing DM130 per year, useful for travellers and businessmen.

Every bank may now have its own name on the card and offer auxiliary benefits; however, all have abstained from taking this up for the time being.

The new Eurocards are standard cards and have just one purpose — the extension of the plastic credit card to the masses.

About 22 million West Germans have for a long time been used to paying with their Eurocheque cards. According to estimates by the banks there is room in the a country like the Federal Republic for seven million credit cards and the chance of the sale of a further five million.

Until now there have been 984,000 Eurocards in circulation in the Federal Republic, about 700,000 American Express cards and 340,000 Diners Club cards.

Visa is the toughest competitor to the Eurocard umbrella organisation Mastercard. After long, fruitless negotiations for a cooperation agreement German credit banks ignominiously gave up.

Visa claims to have 330,000 customers, which the banks doubt, believing the figure is more likely 270,000.

Everyone in the market will profit from the credit card boom. Jürgen Terrahe is a member of the Commerzbank executive board and chairman of the supervisory board of the Society for Payment Systems. He believes that an additional million customers could be attracted to take up Eurocards in 1989.

Jan Hendrikx of Visa International hopes to interest a "major group of cooperative credit institutions" in his organisation, apart from the eleven German banks already involved in Visa.

Hendrikx is certain that there will be a million Visa cards in circulation in the Federal Republic by the end of the year, although, since the breakdown of negotiations with the Society for Payment Systems, Visa must convince each bank individually of its own advantages and the disadvantages of the Eurocard, linked to Mastercard.

But Visa has had a major success. From the middle of May ADAC, the West German motoring club, will offer its own Visa-linked card for DM45.

The Society for Payment Systems had had its eyes on the ADAC card.

The traditional credit card organisations, Diners Club and American Express, are convinced that consumers will quickly discover the weak points of Eurocard and Visa and will then turn to their cards.

The Cologne-based General Association of the German Retail Trade and the German Hotel and Restaurant Association can see their chance here.

A court case, instigated by the banks, against their "Deutsche Kreditkarte" and the hotels association, almost thwarted their plans.

Although the intention is to defend the complaint about the "Deutsche Kreditkarte" name or "DKK" for short, to the very highest court, it will be impossible to launch the card with this name.

Due to the court case and the concept behind this credit card, which is so like the Eurocard, the retail trade feels unsure, but the low commission retail traders will have to pay is a considerable attraction.

The banks have made a survey of some of their clients. Judging by reactions everyone is longing to get their hands on the new plastic cards.

The North Rhine-Westphalia giro bank, which has distributed so far 8,000 Eurocards and which has now done an about-face to Visa, will distribute 100,000 of their cards over the next three years starting mid-March, each card costing DM60.

Major banks such as the Commerzbank believe they can double the number of their Eurocard customers. The savings banks plan to distribute 450,000 new Eurocards.

This boom has not only awakened appetites for business but also aroused aggressions. The Society for Payment Systems regards Visa as a "latecomer." Visa officials say of Eurocard: "They have just copied us."

Among bankers DKK is regarded as "a bad joke" because of the simplicity of its concept, while retail traders complain of Eurocard managers as "swindlers" because of their commission demands.

This kind of scrapping between the various credit card organisations can only be to the advantage of the bank customer.

Under pressure from the Monopolies Commission all bank cash dispensers in the Federal Republic must be geared to accept Eurocheque cards, Eurocards and Visa cards equally.

It is only a matter of time before American Express and Diners Club cards can be used at all cashpoints.

Quarrelling about the effectiveness, costs and data processing systems should not interest consumers who want to pay with credit cards at the point of sale, abbreviated to POS.

As more and more customers want to pay with their credit card the more supermarket chains and shops generally will be put under pressure to accommodate this consumer requirement.

Major banks are already making plans to handle credit card business under their own management, when the contract with the Society for Payment Systems terminates in two years' time.

Then the Society will no longer handle credit card turnover but the banks themselves — a business which begins to become profitable after 300,000 cards have been distributed.

Commerzbank director Herbert Droege believes it would be impossible now to halt the trend to credit cards. He said: "It is like the change over from the horse to the steam engine — at first no-one wanted that."

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 4 March 1989)

Demand for information widens role of banks



"Five years ago you would never have dreamt how dramatically banking would change," said Knut Neuss, director of Deutsche Bank's business information department. He was not exaggerating.

Five years ago banks and savings banks were more-or-less pure financial houses whose activities were fundamentally limited to handling deposits, offering credits, dealing in shares and foreign currency.

Today they are involved in a lot more than money and interest rates. The computer fair in Hanover, CeBIT, shows this clearly.

The bank today is an organisation offering comprehensive information and advice, including information about matters which are not directly involved in banking.

Banking has an enormous information requirement as new business opportunities are revealed and exploited.

Information, stored in super-computers and offered to clients for a fee, has become a decisive competitive factor and a new source of income.

The meteoric technical progress in electronic data processsing is making this possible. The new magical expression in German banking circles is "electronic banking."

Demonstrating how this electronic service worked, Neuss quoted the example of a printing works which had to invest to prevent environmental pollution by its industrial effluents.

Solution

A technical solution to the problem was sought in the bank's patent databank, and the solution's reputation enquired about in the market and the price checked.

In the next databank 50 environmental protection programmes were looked into to see if they qualified for public grants, so as eventually to scrutinse the effect of the investment on the balance sheet.

There was also a programme to increase turnover in certain cases and tips as to how the company could be more effectively organised.

According to Neuss the solution to the whole complex of problems cost "not as much as DM2,500," including payment for an external "information broker," the Heidelberg firm online, and the bank computers fed by specialists from the university.

Thanks to state subsidies, which the computer had shown how to apply for, the investment was a few per cent cheaper. Furthermore a considerable proportion of expenditure on materials and personnel could be covered by the company itself.

Neuss said that the bank gained from its "active information marketing;" the new service could also contribute to making credit decisions.

The Deutsche Bank has been at the last four computer fairs in Hanover, and savings banks have also been regular participants. People's banks and agricultural credit cooperatives are also getting together and going on the electronic offensive.

Agricultural credit cooperatives are offering their customers information about all manner of banking activities from settlements abroad to futures finance. Bits and bytes are being offered in 20 versions.

The technical requirements have been set up, according to Bernd Raswald, a board member of the umbrella organisation for people's banks and agricultural credit cooperatives, so that every one of their branches in the countryside can build up an extensive and efficient information and advisory service equal to that offered by a bank in an important centre of finance.

The computer services available from banks concentrate on two areas: environmental protection and the single European market, areas which are definitely "in" at the moment.

Small and medium-sized firms are a prime target group for both areas.

The Deutsche Bank has discovered that 70 per cent of these companies intend to invest to protect the environment over the next two to three years but a recent study has shown that every second company was unaware that there are databanks to help in investment of this sort.

The requirement for computer research in this area, up to manual elaboration of investment and financial planning, is considerable then. It only has to be stimulated.

Advice is also aimed at small to medium-sized companies about the planned single European market.

Almost a half of companies surveyed by the cooperative banks said that they would rearrange their production with an eye to 1993, but most of them were uncertain about what the effects would be.

Bernhard Schramm, president of the umbrella organisation for people's banks and agricultural credit cooperatives, said that small firms were very poorly informed about this.

He said that expert knowledge stored in databanks on tax and economic legislation, technology and patents should be a remedy for this.

The Deutsche Bank and the savings banks apply Individual Balance Analyses, Branch Services and other computer operations in their business information activities.

The credit cooperative institutes intend to apply more intensely than the Deutsche Bank and the savings banks new criteria when advising private clients.

Apart from electronic banking equipment such as cash dispensers and account print-outs, the cooperatives are offering further computer-oriented facilities, for instance two real estate programmes and a new kind of information system on stocks and shares.

This system offers not only stock exchange information from Frankfurt, London, New York or Tokyo, via satellite in some cases, to the counters of banks all over the country, but also allows clients to give buying and selling orders, conveyed to the stock exchange by the press of a button.

Bernd Wittkowski

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 8 March 1989)

■ MOTORING

Daimler-Benz unveils new image-polishing roadster



Daimler-Benz board chairman Werner Niefer, unveiling the new Mercedes-Benz SL roadster just before the Geneva motor show, called it a "new star and the start of a new Mercedes legend."

It sports the initials of the almost legendary Mercedes-Benz 300 SL of the 1950s, when the sporting performance of a powerful roadster could not be combined with comfort and safety as it can today.

It has taken the fast and furious development of modern electronics to make this combination possible.

When a car costs between DM90,000 and DM125,000 Daimler-Benz, with their proverbial attention to detail and insistence on quality and safety, can be expected to deliver the goods.

The Stuttgart carmakers had for too long been criticised for making good but conservative cars, with the result that the glamour of the Mercedes star logo was losing a little of its cachet both in Germany and around the world.

But the new model is entirely in keeping with Gottlieb Daimler's ambition to manufacture "the best or nothing" — in Germany, in Europe and worldwide.

"Mercedes-Benz is now hitting back," said the company's press spokesman, Herr Kleinert, with reference to the three versions of the SL on show at Geneva.

They are intended to spearhead the new overall Mercedes concept and regain the lead in the European market. But what is so special about the new model?

It comes in an initial choice of three engines: the six-cylinder, three-litre, 190-hp engine; the six-cylinder, four-valve, 231-hp engine (in the 300 SL-24); and the eight-cylinder, four-valve, five-litre, 326-hp engine (in the 500 SL).

All versions of the Mercedes-Benz SL are fitted with standard three-way catalytic converters (in a new and improved design).

A mechanical and electronic injection device supplies the lambda probe with extra heat, monitors the exhaust return system and ensures ventilation of the active carbon container.

Driving "topless" is what makes a roadster such fun. All versions of the new SL have an electronic soft top that can be raised from or returned to (and locked in) its hood box in 30 seconds by pushing a button.

Extra safety is provided by an electronic over-roll bar, normally recessed in front of the hood box, that is automatically activated in dangerous situations. The performance of all three versions is typically sporting. Depending on the engine, they accelerate to 100kph (60mph) from a standing start in either 6.3 or 9.2 seconds. Their top speeds vary from 230 to 250kph (144-156mph).



Just the thing to go shopping in.

(Photo: Daimler-Benz)

The 500 SL has a four-speed automatic transmission designed to encourage drivers not to overdo the speed.

The six-cylinder versions have a five-speed gearbox, while the 300 SL has a sporting gearbox with a lower transmission ratio.

The electronics is naturally the latest and best: ABS anti-blocking brake system, ASR cumulative drive and the new ADS adaptive absorber system.

The latter automatically adjusts shock absorbers to one of four settings best suited to the road surface and driving conditions.

A new generation of integrated seats has been incorporated in the new SL to ensure the comfort and well-being of driver and passengers.

Belt height and headrest position are electronically linked, and the belt is automatically tautened. A sports car can now be said to fully equal the passenger safety rating of an up-market family saloon.

An initial 20,000 SLs a year are to run off the latest Daimler-Benz assembly lines in Bremen.

The SL certainly stole the show on the opening day of the Geneva auto salon. From the moment the doors opened the Daimler-Benz stand was besieged by press photographers from all over the world.

Joachim W. Reifenrath

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 10 March 1989)



■ EXHIBITIONS

The making of a personality, an artist and a woman as well

General-Anzeiger

Crossing frontiers of one kind or another characterised Paula Modersohn-Becker's whole life.

She had to surmount the limitations imposed on her as a woman, the limitations in her role as woman in middle-class society at the turn of the century, to master her art.

She also had to break away from the limitations of Worpswede (an art colony near Bremen, established in 1889) and the artistic circles there to live a free life in Paris and get to know modern art. And finally she had to overcome the lines dividing the 19th and 20th centuries.

The boundary, the rupture cut through her personality as a painter even, as well as her being as a woman and an artist.

This problem has only been described analytically and questioned in the new women's movement of the 1970s, but Paula Modersohn-Becker recorded in those years, in her work as an artist and in her letters and diaries, that she was aware of this incompatibility, that she was one of the pioneers of a woman's right to live her own life.

An exhibition is being mounted in Worpswede to celebrate the art colony's 100th anniversary. This exhibition will show (*starting on 18 March*) just how extensive her work was despite her early death.

When we look at her pictures we see these frontiers, boundaries and limitations, which passed through the very centre of her being.

An individual identity in terms of living and art was not (yet) possible. This rupture is particularly noticeable in her self-portraits.

Take, for example, her self-portrait done in Paris in 1900. On New Year's Eve 1899 she broke away from the security of her family and the tranquillity of Worpswede to give herself up to the free life and the artistic stimulation of Paris — following the example of her friend, the sculptress Clara Rilke-Westhoff.

This was the first turning point in her life and traces of it can be seen in this self-portrait.

She was born in Dresden in 1876. Her family was upper-class: her father extremely patriarchal, her mother protective and full of drive.

She was given painting lessons when she was 16 and in London. She continued her studies in Bremen: her family had moved there in the meantime.

She was forced by her father to finish her examinations to be a teacher so that she could be financially independent. It did not seem conceivable that the art produced by a woman could offer any guarantee of an income.

Paula's mother supported her actively and emotionally. She did this perhaps because she had lived all her life in the service of her family and nurtured the hope that she would find a kind of freedom through her children.

She was a constantly dependable companion to Paula, but not the model of a modern woman who has decided to lead her own life.

It is not surprising then that Paula finally took the path her mother had shown her.

After her courageous attempt to find freedom in marriage, following her mother's example, she sought support from her husband and in motherhood.

The tragedy of her destiny was that at the focal point of this role, at the birth *of her first* child, awaited with such longing, she had to die at the age of 31.

Paris was her first encounter with a foreign world, and she was constantly drawn towards Paris from then on.

She needed the refreshing stimulation of Paris: this was just as essential to her life as her links to Worpswede.

It is not surprising then that she found herself electrified by Paris but at the same time made to feel insecure.

Painting her self-portrait might well have been an attempt to orient herself in a world far from her father's rule, remaining true to herself even through she had crossed over a frontier.

In the self-portrait she found a dramatic means of examining in detail the question: who am I and whom shall I become?

Time and time again in her letters and diaries there is the affirmation that something will come out of her, that she will produce something from the path she has herself chosen to go along.

In her self-portraits she examined whether she had remained true to this. There is a resolute, concentrated gravity *in all her self-portraits. The glance is the* vivid centre of the person, who conquers her world with her eyes.

There is also scepticism, with which she regards with appropriate restraint her difficult role as an artist.

Even as a child she did not feel she was understood, her artistic will was not recognised.

There is in her self-portrayals a suppressed sadness, as if she knew how transitory her life was, and life generally — a thought which appears early in her diary.

Her will to live seemed strengthened by the self-portraits, as for example in the self-portrait painted against blossoming trees, dating from 1902.

Although this picture is charming and appealing, there is nothing vain or complaisant in it.

Rather it shows, as in the other self-portraits, how she tried to achieve a unity in herself, to resolve an extreme craving in the artistic figure. She set herself a goal, perhaps because she lacked recognition in her life. Her husband was a person whose respect she particularly valued. There are many unsettling entries in her diary about him though. He deplored that Paula "hated the conventional," and did everything "rather in an angular, ugly, bizarre, wooden way." He said that she painted "hands like spoons, noses like beaks, mouths like wounds, expressions cretinously." And she also did not take advice.

Paula longed to explore new artistic possibilities. She wanted to measure her own artistic course against that taken by others, and for that she needed support.

There was no-one to give her this support, not in Paris nor Worpswede. There was also no specific female tradition to which she could have turned.

She regarded herself as fortunate that her teacher at the Berlin School of Painting and Drawing was Jeanne Bauck. The fundamentals of her approach to art and her self-confident appearance impressed Paula considerably.

Obviously it was not easy for her to meet women in life with whom she could identity.

She read the diary of the Russian artist Maria Bashkirtseff (1860-1884). There she came across the expression "sister soul," which became a perfect example of an understanding of people.

Her longing for such a sisterly relationship was fulfilled best of all in her friendship with Clara Rilke-Westhoff. Paula felt drawn to her, whom she met "in sweet dreams."

This friendship between the two artists was a source of encouragement and creative energy for Paula.

Her letters and diaries reveal how she had fought for this friendship, and how she early on realised the desperateness of her wooing of Clara.

In the end she not only gave up friendship but also the hope of any independence, such as Clara had found. Paula was manifestly not prepared to go it alone as a woman.

Paula Modersohn-Becker's later self-portraits spanned those development stages in which she found finally her own powers of expression.

She painted many self-portraits in the difficult years 1906/1907. In her writings on the other hand, she became more and more withdrawn, as if she had gradually found her true form of expression.

The self-portrait, done on the 6th anniversary of her marriage, shows her semi-nude. She is pregnant. The body is displayed as a tender, precious receptacle, not only for the bearing of children but for art.

The paradox is the solitariness of life in which she was left with her longing.

Other semi-nude pictures followed, studies for a bold self-portrait completely nude.

This was an innovation in the history of art: a woman not as an object erotically idealised by the male, but a woman who has made herself the subject of his creation, using her own being and her own corporeality.

This corresponds to what she said at about the same time in a letter to Rainer Maria Rilke: "I am I."

Paula Modersohn-Becker was not only emancipated in her person but also in her aesthetic demands. She traversed the standards of male art in her self-portraits. She has had an influence on her period and on art. In the 1970s female painters have latched on to this when they have used their bodies as a medium of expression.

American writer and feminist Adrienne Rich wrote a poem about the friendship between Paula Becker and Clara Westhoff, visualising the premature solidarity of women artists.

Paula Modersohn-Becker became regarded as a pioneer, she, who looked so earnestly for female examples to follow.

In her pictures she intimately shared with us the female experiences of birth and death, creation and transgression.

In this way she successfully balanced out the contradictions and opened up a new path for a female view of aesthetics.

Barbara von Bechtolsheim

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 11 March 1989)

Who am I? Self portrait with amber necklace, 1906.

(Photo: Catalogue)

Continued from page 3

issue for the Bonn coalition. For Count Lambsdorff this may not be the case.

The strategy debate within the FDP was certainly not made any less heated by Count Lambsdorff's views on short-range missile "modernisation" as voiced in a recent interview with the Hamburg newsweekly *Der Spiegel*.

He drew such subtle distinctions that it was virtually impossible to infer what views, if any, he holds on the subject. Does he want to pacify the CDU/CSU or is he really keen on taking over from Herr Genscher at the Foreign Office?

If the FDP is to survive time and tide, as Herr Genscher puts it, it must nail its colours to the mast. No-one can force it to say now who it will throw in its lot with after next year's general election.

But if it is to hold distinct views of its own it must acknowledge views shared with others than the CDU/CSU and not disregard them even though it might seem tactically advisable to do so.

In foreign affairs, from visas to disarmament, not to mention relations with Poland, on a wide range of domestic and legal issues, from demonstrations and abortion to getting on with foreign residents, the FDP has much more in common with the SPD than with the CDU/CSU.

This is a fact it cannot conceal from potential conservative supporters. No less a Free Democrat than Count Lambsdorff, who is felt to represent the laissez faire economic wing of the Free Democrats, is on record as having said:

"I have always said, long before I stood for party leader, that the FDP must not degenerate into a party of business interests — and those were my exact words."

Udo Bergdoll

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 9 March 1989)

■ THE ARTS

From doodlingesque to tachisme: a home wanted for a collection

Lothar Späth, Prime Minister of Baden-Württemberg, regularly hits the headlines with arts projects. His latest idea is to assemble a collection of paintings by Hans Hartung, a pioneer of action painting. Experts estimate that the Hartung collection is worth DM400 million. Hartung is now 84 and lives in Antibes, surrounded by 200 paintings — not all of them his own.

When I was young I bought a few paintings, a Corinth, a Nolde, a Kokoschka. Later I acquired a beautiful Picasso and a Soulages," Hans Hartung recalled.

He was born in Leipzig in 1904. In the 1920s Nolde and Kokoschka were the expressionistic base from which he developed his painting — a pure, tender, "psychic" abstract art.

His earlier doodlingesque pictures were the origins of what later became tachisme; his pictorial attempt to bring aesthetic order to chaos made him a forerunner of "action painting."

His paintings hang today in galleries in Munich, Darmstadt and Paris. All over the world galleries have, over the past few years, put on exhibitions of the works of the pioneer of the psychogram, who was awarded the prize at the 1960 Biennale in Venice.

Anyone in Stuttgart who wants to see Hartung's work must climb into the storerooms of the Staatsgalerie, where the grill-painting *T 1949/6, Prison*, acquired in 1963, is stored by the gallery's director Peter Beye, or to Nürtingen to the collection of Ottomar Dominck.

Hartung was labelled by the Nazis as "degenerate." He emigrated to France in 1935 and joined the Foreign Legion, fighting for the French at Belfort, where he lost a leg.

With his second wife, the Norwegian painter Anne-Eva Bergmann, Hartung moved to an idyllic spot at Antibes on the Côte d'Azur in 1972.

He now lives alone in a wheelchair amidst a pack of huge dogs, surrounded by his paintings. (His wife died after being attacked by one of the dogs last year.)

Hartung's collection is regarded as a goldmine. He exchanged paintings with his world-famous artist friends — Picasso, Chagall, Rohlfs, Braque, Lhote and others.

He built up his collection with his credo: "I like art which is something different to my own paintings."

In this way he acquired a collection of important artworks of the classical moderns, apart from his own works, and including five sculptures by the Spanish artist Julio Gonzalez, whose daughter, Roberta, was Hartung's first wife.

Now, in his old age, Hartung wants to place his own paintings in a museum devoted to his work, a Hartung mausoleum so to speak.

How difficult it is to do this is demonstrated by the snub given to collector Lothar-Günther Buchheim by the Bavarian Science Minister Wolfgang Wild. Buchheim wants to house his important collection of artworks in a "Buchheim Museum" on the Starnberger See.

Two years ago the Munich art-dealer Rolf Kallenberg, one of Hartung's friends, called at the Bavarian Chancellery, to offer the Bavarian state Hartung's collection: or more accurately a half of his collection, the artist wants to bequeath the other half to France, his second home.

The Bavarians were interersted, particularly Franz Josef Strauss and his then intimate friend, Renate Piller.

Ronald Leitner of the Bavarian Chancellery said: "There was a plan to open up a museum at Kochel am See for Hartung's collection." He said that there was serious consideration given to the plan, three pavilions covering 1,200 square metres, costing DM20 million. Hartung would not have been alone at Kochel am See; there is also a Franz Marc Museum there. The plan did not get very far, although the contracts between Strauss and Hartung became ever more close — the Bavarians gave him the Order of the Federal Republic of Germany which was presented to him in his holiday resort Grasse.

The man who put the brakes on the plan was the then Bavarian Finance Minister, Max Streibl (CSU). He is now the Prime Minister of Bavaria.

Leitner said that there was still an interest in the project. Science Minister Wild wrote a letter along these lines to Hartung — but with Strauss's death there was no longer anyone in Munich who was prepared to follow the plan through.

Now Lothar Späth has come along with an offer. His councillor Göngenwein said: "We have an interest in the collection." But he admitted that "we have not yet seen the collection. We must see what the requirements are. We should be open and frank about everything."

Späth intends to build a "Collectors' Museum" in Stuttgart. It is debatable whether there would be room for the Hartung collection in this project.

It is assumed, and this is understandable, that Hartung wants a museum of his own works for future generations. But officials in Stuttgart are obviously set on bringing the other famous pictures which Hartung has to Stuttgart — pictures from Picasso to Chagall.

This is naturally frustrating for the venerable artist at his home in Antibes. A feel for the diplomatic is needed, pschological sophistication.

If what one hears in Munich about the price for the Hartung collection is true then Späth would not find it easy to say No.

Hartung would like to present a half of his collection valued allegedly at DM200 million to the state of Baden-Württemberg, and in return a museum would be offered to house the collection — certainly not an inexpensive undertaking.

It would cost about a half a million deutschemarks to transfer the collection.

Gönnenwwein said: "A deed of assignment — not buy them! That would be fantastic."

Späth is now about to find out just how "fantastic" this is. Hartung is not just anyone.

On his 70th birthday on 21 September 1979 he said: "Most artists, if they are good artists, give their best towards the end of their lives." Hartung is a good artist.

Klaus B. Harms

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 4 March 1989)



Hans Hartung (left) with the late Franz Josef Strauss in 1987.

(Photo: dpa)



Hartung's *Third of May*, 1921-22 in the style of Goya.

(Photo: Catalogue)

German motorists have without question been the most pollution-conscious in Western Europe ever since European Community Environment Ministers agreed to endorse pollution-controlled cars over five years ago.

Cars with catalytic converters (and other low-pollution models) have been more popular in the Federal Republic of Germany than anywhere else in the Common Market.

Even so, the Bonn government would like to see them even more pollution-conscious. Better late than never, the Federal government now acknowledges a shortcoming critics of the European Community vehicle emission compromise have constantly pilloried.

Statistics may show that the majority of cars newly registered in Germany are pollution-controlled, but most owe this accolade more to the feeble compromise reached in Brussels than to any genuine reduction in the toxin count of their exhaust fumes.

It was a compromise to which the Federal government had no choice but to agree, but the levels agreed are often so low that they can be reached by fairly simple technical means.

Even models that have been marketed for decades comply in some cases with European Community vehicle emission regulations.

The three-way catalytic converter, which is the only really effective means of pollution control, has been fitted to a mere fraction of the new cars that qualify as pollution-controlled in the European Community.

A mere six per cent, or 1.8m of 29m private cars in the Federal Republic, comply with US pollution regulations, which can only be met with the aid of a catalytic converter.

■ THE ENVIRONMENT

Tougher rules on vehicle exhaust emissions mooted

Bonn Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer feels this is not enough, especially as nitric oxide pollution, one cause of the acid rain that has wrought havoc on German forests, is on the increase and has failed to decline, as theoretically expected.

Professor Töpfer, a university economist, plans to go it alone and make catalytic converters mandatory for all new cars in Germany unless the situation improves.

This move, envisaged from 1991, may not be in keeping with European Community law so shortly before the single internal market deadline but, as a Ministry spokeswoman puts it, "we should just have to see."

In two years' time the environment policy compromise on pollution control of compact cars agreed last autumn is due to be reappraised.

Last autumn Bonn failed again to prevail on other Community countries to accept its ideas on pollution control. The French in particular were opposed to lower pollution ceilings and threatened to stymie the entire compromise.

In resurrecting the vehicle emission debate the Federal government has run the risk of making car-buyers feel unsure where they stand.

Hardly a weekend now passes without some new idea or other being mooted on how to ensure that all motorists switch to catalytic converters.

These proposals make headline news, and German motorists find them anything but reassuring. Baden-Württemberg, for instance, has seriously suggested an autobahn speed limit of 100kph for pollution "offenders" with cat cars being exempted — and allowed to drive at any speed they like.

The great minds who dreamt up this idea cannot have devoted much thought to road safety.

The Federal Transport Ministry has suggested issuing cat cars with distinctive number plates — as an accolade for the pollution-conscious and a stigma for pollution "offenders."

The Federal Environment Ministry has considered proposing a road tax, to be raised throughout the European Community, based on vehicle emission rather than engine size, horse power or any other criterion.

This labyrinth of ideas and proposals has been a traditional feature of the vehicle emission debate. Diesel-owners in particular know to their cost how fast a reputation for environmental cleanliness can deteriorate into the stigma of environmental squalor.

Diesel-engined cars were initially classified as low-pollution and road tax-exempted as an incentive. Those were the days.

They have now been pilloried for particle emission that is said to cause cancer. Their tax exemption has been waived and replaced by a higher, penal rate of road tax.

A similar fate may lie in store for cars that were initially classified as low-pollution but meet the unexacting European Community requirements without a catalytic converter.

Twice the Bonn government has been in a position to insist on stricter emission ceilings in the European Community. The Federal Republic is, after all, both the largest motor manufacturer and the largest motor market in the Community.

But on both occasions other members have refused point-blank to play ball. Britain and France have been particularly reluctant to toe the German line on emission control. They still are, and neither is likely to change its mind in the years ahead. In France, for instance, pollution-controlled cars enjoy no incentive whatever: unleaded fuel costs a franc per litre more than leaded.

In Britain hopes are set on developing an engine that will comply with US emission regulations without needing a catalytic converter to filter toxins out of exhaust fumes.

But this engine cannot possibly go into series production before the end of the century. And "lean" engines made in Japan need catalytic converters to reach US standards.

So Professor Töpfer is out on a limb in the European Community, and lacks a clear policy concept, as manufacturers have been quick to note.

"Fine words mustn't be allowed to destroy all the goodwill," says a spokesman for the German motor manufacturers' association.

The Federal government may advise Germans to buy cat cars, but tax incentives to do so have been set aside pending a ruling by the European Court of Justice on whether they are in keeping with Community law.

Yet without tax incentives few car owners are going to have their cars converted. Fine words about the environment are all well and good, but the cash is what counts, in the final analysis.

Even if Professor Töpfer can convince German carmakers to sell only cat models in the Federal Republic from 1991, he will be unlikely to meet with much goodwill from importers.

Imports account for 38 per cent of compacts and small cars (of up to 1,400cc) sold, as against 22 per cent of German cars in this category bought in the Federal Republic.

That is why cat cars make up a meagre 20 per cent of imports, although their share is slowly increasing.

Importers are understandably reluctant to commit themselves on the sales prospects for cat cars at this end of the market.

"We must wait and see," they say, "whether they are accepted by car-buyers who are usually very price-conscious in this section of the market."

Walther Wuttke

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 3 March 1989)

Ozone layer: Europe moves to cut CFC production

Scientists' warnings about the threat to the ozone layer have finally been heeded by politicians. European Community Environment Ministers have agreed, almost surprisingly, on a gradual phase-out of CFC, or chlorofluorocarbons, by the end of the century.

They have agreed to aim at a worldwide ban on the spraycan gas that has been identified as largely to blame for punching a hole into the earth's ozonosphere.

Only last year international agreement was arduously reached to halve CFC production from January 1989, but the international convention is not yet in force in all producer countries.

Yet for some time there have been signs that countries which had tended to drag their feet on this issue were changing their minds.

Britain's Margaret Thatcher has grasped the opportunity of championing the cause of saving the world from the "greenhouse effect" and President Mitterrand of France is not to be outdone by the "Iron Lady" of 10, Downing Street.

Both have hosted recent international conferences; in London and The Hague on the ozone layer.

Destruction of the ozone layer by CFC gases is by no means the sole cause of the higher mean surface temperatures at which scientists point a warning finger.

Static and vehicle emission and dust particles from industrial and power station smokestacks and vehicle exhaust are also to blame, as is destruction of the tropical rain forests.

So there may yet be hopes of European Community Environment Ministers "miraculously" appreciating — and acting on — other aspects of the problem.

Eventually all industrialised countries might come to appreciate the problems faced by the Third World, at least where tropical rain forest destruction is concerned, and heed these warnings too.

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 7 March 1989)

■ HEALTH

Survey looks at effects of a meat-free diet

Frankfurter Rundschau

Vegetarian diets have been favoured by famous men since the days of classical antiquity. Socrates, Plato and Pythagoras, for instance, were all convinced vegetarians.

Yet public opinion continues to see vegetarians as joyless sectarians, which may be why researchers have repeatedly sought to arrive at scientific criteria by which to judge how healthy a vegetarian diet is.

Professor Helmut Rottka has now presented the findings of a five-year survey commissioned by the Federal Health Office, Berlin.

The "Berlin Vegetarian Survey" takes a closer look at the health benefits, variously outlined in scientific literature, of a meatless diet in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Seventy-two men and women aged over 18 were investigated. All had lived for at least five years on either a strict vegetarian or — the control group — a non-vegetarian healthfood diet.

The vegetarians included several vegans (who don't eat milk or eggs either) and a number of people who ate meat, fish, poultry, ham or bacon only once a month, say.

In terms of sex or occupation the two groups — vegetarians and non-vegetarian healthfooders — were more or less balanced.

But the vegetarians included more self-employed and wage-earners and fewer salary-earners and civil servants than the non-vegetarians.

The findings of this long-term survey provide important pointers to the importance for health of a low-meat diet.

Vegetarians, for instance, have a lower caloric intake than non-vegetarians on balance and have little difficulty in keeping to their "ideal" weight.

Non-vegetarians, in contrast, even those who take care to eat a balanced healthfood diet, must make do with their "normal" weight.

Both groups consume roughly equal amounts of fat, but it has a less marked effect on vegetarians because of their different eating habits.

Male vegetarians consume on average seven grams more polyunsaturated fatty acids per day than non-vegetarians. The corresponding figure for women is three grams.

They also have a markedly lower cholesterol intake than meat-eaters. Seventy-one per cent of them stay below the recommended ceiling of 200 milligrams of cholsterol per decilitre of blood.

This is true of only 45 per cent of health-conscious carnivores. Vegetarians' blood pressure and weight are also markedly below the national average.

Vegetarians were, however, found to have a much lower vitamin B_{12} count than non-vegetarians; this bore out the findings of other surveys.

Vitamin B_{12} counts were found to be below the critical level in 16 per cent of male and 11 per cent of female vegetarians.

That is why a strict vegetarian diet is not advisable for pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers — or, for that matter, for babies and infants.

Vegetarians' iron counts were likewise found to be lower than the recommended levels, but seldom caused identifiable symptoms — except under strain, such as during pregnancy.

On balance vegetarians seem to be healthier than non-vegetarians. Both groups were asked to fill in a questionnaire asking whether they had ever suffered from symptoms of specific complaints.

Only 4.8 per cent of vegetarian women, as against 27 per cent of non-vegetarians, had been told they had high blood pressure. The corresponding figures for men were 13.5 and 24.3 per cent.

Only 17.2 per cent of vegetarian women, as against nearly 30 per cent of non-vegetarians, had been told they showed signs of circulation trouble. The figures for men were 2.6 and 15.8 per cent respectively.

Vegetarians mentioned diseases of the joints, the stomach and intestines much less frequently than meat-eaters.

Their higher intake of roughage was again shown to have a beneficial effect on the kidney and gall-bladder.

Other findings indicated substantial differences where diet-related cancer was concerned.

As far fewer vegetarians smoke, and fewer drink alcohol, than non-vegetarians do, other cancer and coronary risk factors don't apply either.

Vegetarians more frequently go in for sport, preferring meditation and breathing exercises, water cures and sauna baths to physical exercise as such.

They also fast more often — even though they hardly need to do so.

Their outlook on consumption and luxury goods is almost missionary. They often buy fruit and vegetables, and even their potatoes, in healthfood stores, and classify wine as an alcoholic drink to be avoided.

French surveys have failed to confirm that this attitude has a beneficial effect on their health.

So the only conclusion to be reached from the Berlin survey is that we would all do well to revert to a mixed but balanced diet in which meat is more of an extra than the focal point of the meal.

Renate Kingma

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 25 February 1989)

Don't turn up your nose: more of garlic's secrets exposed



Folk lore has it that if two people — one a garlic-eater, the other not — share a bed, the latter will steadily decline and die.

Another proverb has it that to give away the last bulb, let alone clove, of garlic in the house will bring bad luck on the giver.

Garlic stems burnt in the garden are said to keep caterpillars at bay. Plaits of garlic hung round horses' necks are said to keep the evil eye at bay.

Last but not least, the little people at the bottom of your garden will go away if you serve them milk laced with garlic.

For centuries garlic has been said to cure gallstones, rickets and lumbago.

Herodotus said Ancient Egyptian priests spent 1,600 talents of silver, or roughly DM7.5m, on garlic and onions to keep the workmen who built Pharaoh Cheops's pyramid healthy.

In the Middle Ages St Hildegard used garlic to treat jaundice, while Paracelsus recommended its use to keep the plague at bay.

At an international garlic symposium held in Lüneburg 80 experts from all over the world compared notes and research findings on the 1989 "medicinal plant of the year."

It was said to make the blood flow better and improve the supply of essential oxygen to all parts of the body.

"The risk of a heart attack, a stroke and blood vessel upsets can thus be reduced by taking high-grade garlic capsules," said Holger Kiesewetter of the University of the Saar.

Dr Kiesewetter has carried out three pilot projects proving that garlic helps to dissolve blood clots.

Modern garlic research is also concerned with the use of garlic capsules to regulate blood pressure. Dr Edzard Ernst of Munich University's department of physical medicine briefed the symposium on the results of a low-calorie diet combined with a daily intake of 600 milligrams of powdered garlic.

High cholesterol counts were reduced, he said. So was blood pressure.

Professor Ewald Sprecher from Hamburg said: "The positive effects on certain sectors in prevention of arteriosclerosis have been proven. Garlic was used not to reduce blood pressure but only as an ancillary medication."

The effect always depended on the quality of the garlic used, which was why garlic capsule manufacturers have called on the Federal Health Office, Berlin, to specify standard garlic ingredient counts, especially for alliin and allicin.

Capsules have come into their own because few people relish chewing garlic raw. "People in the Federal Republic don't like the smell," said pharmaceutical specialist Rolf-Dieter Aye.

That was why roughly 20 million capsules a day were taken. The smell of fresh garlic could be reduced by drinking milk and chewing parsley, coffee beans and chervil.

But there was nothing that could really be done to counteract garlic exuded by the lungs and skin.

The experts were convinced that garlic, which has been a crop plant for thousands of years, especially in China, still has many surprises in store.

"By no means all agents and ingredients have been analysed," Professor Sprecher said.

Garlic's scientific reputation has only recently been reinforced by experimental proof of the traditional claim that it keeps bacteria and fungi at bay. *dpa*

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 25 February 1989)

New method of testing food for insecticide

Health care foods such as cod liver oil have been shown by an analytic technique newly devised in Kassel to contain alarmingly large traces of insecticide.

The technique was specially developed to identify in foodstuffs traces of an insecticide consisting of a wide range of chemical compounds.

Toxaphen, used mainly to fight the boll weevil, is a chlorinated hydrocarbon like DDT or Lindan. They are chemically stable and only slowly, if at all, biodegradable.

So they are problematic when enriched in the food cycle and stored in fatty tissue.

Unlike DDT, which is a single chemical substance, Toxaphen consists of 180 compounds, which has made it extremely difficult to trace by chemical analysis.

Professor Harun Parlar and his fellow-chemists and environmental chemists at Kassel University of Technology have devised the first analytic technique by which Toxaphen traces in food samples can be quantified.

Substances similar to the components sought are first separated by silica gel. Ultraviolet radiation then photochemically removes enriched chlorine atoms.

The remaining substances can then be identified and quantified.

Regular analysis of food samples has resulted in findings that are surprising, to say the least.

Fish products and cod liver oil, especially in the capsule form sold as health care products, were found to contain traces of Toxaphen sufficient to pose a health hazard if regularly taken.

The Toxaphen count in food samples from the Federal Republic of Germany (10 parts per billion for butter and lard, three parts per billion for whole milk powder) was only just identifiable.

Polychlorphenyl counts were found to be higher. Toxaphen was not clearly identified in Italian olive oil or French walnut oil.

But Toxaphen counts of 30 parts per billion in Rumanian soft cheese and 200 parts per billion in Russian caviar indicate that the insecticide is more widely used in the East bloc.

Fish and fish products are the most heavily polluted. Icelandic cod liver oil was found to contain between 5.8 and 7.1 parts per million.

A cod liver oil sample from Canada contained 27 parts per million.

Cod liver oil, the fairly unpleasant taste of which many will remember from childhood, is frequently sold in capsule form as a health food additive in view of its vitamin and polyunsaturated fatty acid counts.

The Kassel chemists found Toxaphen traces of 6.5 parts per million in cod liver oil capsules, 6.2 parts per million in halibut liver oil capsules and 1.2 parts per million in salmon oil capsules — plus varying counts of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB).

A daily intake of three 270-milligram capsules of cod liver oil, Professor Parlar says, will amount to a monthly intake of 0.16 milligrams of Toxaphen.

Fish products apart, he felt European foodstuffs posed strictly limited health hazards.

Findings are less reassuring in countries where cotton is traditionally an important crop.

(Nordwest Zeitung, Oldenburg, 8 March 1989)

■ THE POLICE FORCE

Rebellious officers form own protest group . . .

Frankfurter Rundschau

Erich Dier, a senior police inspector in Munich, is to go into premature retirement later this year against his will. The reason is that the 47-year-old, on his own admission, did "two terrible things."

At a police operation at the Wackersdorf nuclear reprocessing plant, he observed that in his opinion some politicians posed a greater threat to this country's democracy than masked demonstrators.

And if that wasn't enough, he remarked to journalists that the police "have more important things to do" than concern themselves with the plight of the homeless. "There is a mountain of work to do in investigating environmental crime. I said those bad things openly."

Both observations drew quick disciplinary action. He came under such fire from both colleagues and superiors that "the police doctor decided for my own protection that I am long-term unfit for service." Now he has to end his career as a policeman. And the Bavarian force is not unhappy about getting rid of him.

But it should not celebrate too soon because in the past few years there have been more and more people like Dier turning up. One is a former policeman in Fürth, near Nuremberg, also in Bavaria, Hermann Weiss, 42, who has been a policeman for 24 years. Disciplinary action is also being taken against him because he spoke out instead of keeping quiet.

In letters to local papers, he said that a blockade of judges and lawyers in Mutlangen was "exemplary." Shortly afterwards, following a brutal police operation against a home for political asylum applicants, he said again in the local press that minorities also need the protection of the police.

Dier and Weiss are members of a federal committee of critical policemen (BAG, *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft*) where they have at last discovered what was painfully absent at their duty stations: like-minded, courageous colleagues who were not prepared not to go on every operation they were ordered to without question.

Many took the chance at a meeting in Bonn to discuss the theme, "Glasnost in the Police," to report what has happened in the past three years since BAG was founded and the first 200 members joined up.

The open criticism of the police and the openly expressed disquiet over the nature of its structure and operations has led, not only in Bavaria, to ill feeling against those policemen who do speak out. It has led to their isolation, to their being replaced in their job and to being driven out of the force entirely.

The most blatant example is that of the BAG spokesman, Manfred Such, who had to go into retirement after he talked about the almost-daily occurrences of illegality in police work in a television talk show.

At first, Such was transferred to an administrative job, but then about 60 of his colleagues in his North Rhine-Westphalian precinct handed in a petition protesting against him, and he was unable to remain. He is still "certified ill," as he puts it himself, "ill at work." He is to appear before a court to account for his words.

At this first public meeting of DAG, the sort of experiences emerged that prompted policemen to form the organisation in the first place. And most of the stories were not to do with politics but were of a highly personal nature.

Walter Desoi, from Hesse, related the story of the postcard, which happened some years ago when he was just 21. He went on holiday to the Spanish Costa Brava and sent a postcard to two colleagues. The card showed the American Statue of Liberty with the accompanying text: "In the name of your freedom were murdered: Martin Luther King, Salvador Allende, Che Guevara, thousands of Vietnamese and many others." It turned out to be a mistake. He should have sent a postcard with the usual half-naked girl or view of a beach.

"Then something happened I didn't think was possible." He was investigated. The counter-espionage agency, the *Verfassungschutz*, came in. He had to appear before his superiors to justify his action. The experience developed in Desoi a determination to take up the cudgels for freedom of expression and against arbitrary action by officialdom.

All delegates who have chosen to stand out from the rank and file and say what they think have run into trouble. The attitude of their superiors is : "This officer tends towards confrontation." That's the term which policemen fear they will see in their references but it is a term which BAG hopes to give a positive meaning to.

Delegates came from all parts of the country. Many see themselves as part of a force that is more than just an instrument of power for politicians, to be used in defence of highly doubtful aims and to handle minorities.

One of the few senior police officials present, Michael Kniesel, head of the Bonn force, objected that police officers actually had a duty to object, and they could turn to this duty at any time if they thought a breach of some sort was likely to occur. That observation earned him gales of laughter. Many have found out what that "duty" means.

A Hamburg policeman, Holger Jänicke, who was one of the driving forces behind the founding of BAG three years ago, described what happened when, after 11 years of service, he objected for the first time.

"What happens when you do it? You are treated like a first-class prick. You come under pressure from above, from below and from colleagues." Jänicke turned to police chief Kniesel and added: "Ans because everybody knows that, so everybody can go away and say: oh. yes, there is a duty to object, oh yes."

Jänicke, not least because of the support from BAG, has grown more self confident. In 1986, he and colleagues formed a ring around 600 demonstrators for more than 12 hours in Hamburg. Today, he would not just do it again without demur.

But he does say that it is difficult in such situations to assess how explosive the situation might turn out to be.

He dreams of the day when he sees that an operation "is ignoring human dignity and I simply go to the commander and tell him that I consider the operation illegal and ask him to leave me out of it." And if the request were turned down, he would, correctly in accordance with standing orders, demand written instructions for his continued stay on duty. He hopes that this sort of attitude would also set in motion a process of awareness among senior officers.

The number of critical policemen is tiny — 200 from 200,000 are in BAG. Many others are afraid to take part. Otto Baumgärtner, who is with BKA criminal investigation police (equivalent to CID or FBI) says: "As steps were being taken to form a local group of BAG I spoke to colleagues in the BKA. The nearer the day came, the more urgent came the question: do you think somebody from the *Verfassungschutz* (counter-espionage) will be there?"

Ingrid Müller-Münch

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 6 March 1989)

Tarting up

The police station on the Reeperbahn in Hamburg, the Davidwache, is being closed temporarily for renovation. The distinctive building in the middle of the city's red light area watches over changing trends in the skin business. (Photo:)

. . . but applications to join up are flooding in

In spite of all the complaining about insufficient pay and service frustration, the police force is proving extremely popular as a career for young people, says Rainer Nestler, of the North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry of the Interior.

This year, 1,600 cadet police officers were needed. Within six weeks of advertising, 7,600 applications had been received, a third of them from women. The ministry had been worried that there would be insufficient applications.

Over the past few years, the *Land* trained few police officers because of lack of cash. "We were hardly present in the market for police. There was no recruiting."

Then there was the fear that criticism of the police that they had become whipping boys would have a repelling effect.

The increase in people wanting to be trained as police officers is despite greater availability generally of training places in the job market. The Ministry wants to find out why. Nestler: "It could be that young people are taking a different attitude to law and order."

A poll of 30 applicants for the police, although not claimed to be representative, found that, apart from the old motive of "an assured career for life" there was also now a wish to serve the state by defending its democratic system.

Horst Zimmermann

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 8 March 1989)

Dissatisfied officers want to leave . . .

"Dissatisfied policemen seek new, varied work," reads the heavy print over an advertisement which several policemen in Goslar, south of Hanover, inserted in a daily newspaper.

They have won support from the police union, GdP. Hubert Schwaninger, GdP head in Brunswick, which includes the Goslar area, says: "The dissatisfaction is understandable. The men feel as if they have been abandoned."

The advertisement explained the dissatisfaction: most precincts were understaffed; too much overtime was being worked; the promotion outlook was bad; pay, especially in the middle ranks, was bad; and officers were having to put up with wretched treatment.

The advertisement says that "we no longer are prepared stoically to put up with all the abuse and again and again be required to exercise patience beyond normal levels. We don't want to be a load on the taxpayer's purse any more. For years we have been fed up with the supposed *Beamtenpriviligien* (privilege of being a civil servant, a prized status for many because of its job security)."

The action is modelled on a similar by an East Frisian BKA officer. There are about 70 in the current campaign. Union head Schwaninger says: "For years, we have been trying to get an increase in manpower here." Some of the stations were particularly thinly manned because in this area in the Harz, there were a lot of small stations: 70 per cent of stations had to operate with the minimum staff.

The advertisement says that, in this way, one policeman must guarantee the security for 10,000 local people as well as tourists. According to the Ministry of the Interior, the aim was, in country areas, to have one policeman for every 1,000 inhabitants.

But any significant manpower strengthening is not in sight. According to the union's figures, only 105 officers joined the force in the entire *Land* of Lower Saxony last year; about 400 retire every year because of age. Schwaninger says the new minister of the interior, Josef Stock, has no intention of correcting this imbalance.

He was loathe to comment on the chances the 70 Goslar policemen might have in finding other careers. Private security organisations might not be the answer. Schwaninger: "There are now 13,500 private security personal in Lower Saxony. Slowly, the state's monopoly on might is being called into question."

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 6 March 1989)

■ THE ARMED FORCES

Rapid increase in popularity of conscientious objection



Practising caring instead of killing.

(Photo: Sven Simon)

Officials at the Defence Ministry in Bonn are tormented at present by a fear which in ten years' time could become a reality.

Bundeswehr tanks could be rattling over roadways, bemudded and filthy, because there is no longer anyone available to clean them.

They fear that hardly anyone then will be prepared to be dragged into the mud for 18 months, take part in night marches and have a private life only at the weekends.

Young men in the Federal Republic are opting for social service, working in countless civilian jobs in hospitals, old people's and nursing homes rather than doing their national service.

There is no time to be analytical for the Federal Office for Community Service. Officials no longer know what to do with the piles of applications for exemption from national serice.

There has been a mountain of applications, more than anyone had expected: 85,602 are completing their community service at the present, according to the statistics issued in February. More than 50,000 new applications have been submitted.

To deal with this mountain of applications the Federal Office for Community Service has taken on 100 temporary workers.

There are about 100,000 community service places available, a record in the 28 years the Office for Community Service has been in existence.

All the figures and calculations cannot dispute the fact that there is a sense of helplessness prevailing.

There are no precise surveys, no analyses of motive. No-one quite knows why young men are objecting to military service.

Speculation has got out of control — some of it is logical but it is forgotten that the rational, enlightened individual, who refuses to do military service, does not exist, although it might be that he exists on paper as a perfectly comprehensible person.

Applications for exemption from military service are rarely the result of political considerations. Only applications which are based on conscience are given the state's blessing.

The basic principle is unambiguous: conscience is a possession to be treasured, but there is no clear definition of it.

Senior officers in the Bundeswehr make the job of Community Service officials all the more difficult by demanding objective decisions. Every application is examined for evidence of the applicant's claims.

President Theodor Heuss in his time feared the "mass utilisation of the conscience plea." This was not entirely unfounded for today, according to estimates, a half of all recognised objectors to military service want exemption on grounds other than the dictates of conscience.

Sheer comfort spoils any fun their might have been in drilling. Lack of enthusiasm is sufficient as a motive as well, as is the fun to be had from going through all the hoops until acceptance as an objector to military service.

The new warmth between East and West has also contributed to attitudes. This warmth gives young people a sense of security, of friendship between the powers — why should one learn to fight then?

The enthusiasm for international understanding leaves little room for missiles.

Is the Bundeswehr becoming a victim of the spirit of the times in the 33rd year of its existence? This question is too facile, for the number of objectors to military service has been increasing over the past 20 years, since 1968 in fact, when students questioned rigorously the state and society.

In 1968 Community Service officals had to deal with 12,000 applicants for exemption from military service, more than twice as many as the previous year.

There was a temporary boom in applications in 1977, when 70,000 were submitted. This was the result of what was called the "postcard procedure."

When the Bundestag reintroduced the stumbling block of examining the conscience appeal the number of applications for exemption from military service dropped abruptly.

In fact there is a succinct reason for the present increase in the number of applications for exemption. On the 1 June community service is to be extended from 20 to 24 months. Everyone who wants to claim exemption is hurrying to do so.

For Defence Ministry spokesman Wolf-Eberhard Poulet the problem is not resolved there. He said. "We are dealing here with a trend affecting the whole of society. Objectors to military service are, in fact, a section of public opinion."

It is this which Poulet dreads. The Bundeswehr has achieved its task of maintaining the peace so well, over decades, that even in the 1970s there was hardly anyone who believed that war was a possibility.

Peace has become a matter of course, like the air we breath. Even the Iron Curtain has been lifted more and more over the past few years.

It has not been unheard of for young men, eligible to be called up, to go to the

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

East Bloc to do their *Abitur*, university entrance examination, to Danzig, Moscow or Leningrad.

They have told people there about their anxieties and hopes. Conversely Poles, Romanians and East Germans come to the Federal Republic. There is an exchange of information as never before.

Poulet is worried about the weakened image of the armed forces. He keenly drew circles on a piece of paper, arrows of reference marched away, explaining, amplifying, presenting connections, showing interdependences. But there was no solution in all this.

The slogan of "pluralism" ought to illuminate a little the phenomenon of the objector to military service.

Poulet, who is a serving colonel, did not mentioned another phenomenon: the objector to military service today is mentally and externally quite a different lad to the objector of 20 years ago.

Long hair has been cut; patched jeans are out. The cheeks of the pacifist, given exemption, shine clean shaven. If he wears running shoes then they are those with three stripes. Every third objector to military service wears trendy horn-rimmed spectacles. Certainly there are some of the old school. The neck-scarf flutters in the wind and a self-rolled fag hangs from the corner of his mouth.

There are fewer ideas along the lines of those which made the pacifist's heart beat faster in the past: the state, society and politics.

Young men who object to military service today have for a long time not been against the state and its organs. They go along with it with all its errors and merits, if they are concerned about political and social questions at all that is.

The listlessness towards the state is manifest today in abstention, in a neutrality consciously chosen, in a retreat into private life.

The state is there and is as such accepted. It has just lost in significance. Other things are more important.

In the evening during the week one objector, Robert, rises into the ether. He installs aerials for cash. He watches discussions at the most only on television.

Helmut Kames, community service adviser in the German Peace Society, experiences this day after day. He said: "An attitude of defiance to the state, coloured by ideological considerations, is rare these days."

The archetype of the left-wing objector haunts the minds of majority opinion as an idée fixe.

Kames said that increasingly private, even intimate motives were behind coming out for objecting to military service.

He said there was a wide range of reasons, from reservations on religious grounds to a repugnance for weapons and the equipment of war. Certainly idleness as well. The sheer anxiety of having dirty finger nails.

Josef Opladen, spokesman for the Community Service Office, generously said: "Rather 50 who fiddle their way through than one who afterwards jumps out of the window."

Few objectors' applications are rejected these days. There can be no talk of weird characters on the fringe of society.

They are now a self-confident, strong group, which has been well regarded for some time. The days are past when parents felt ashamed that their sons were not prepared to go into the services.

Today, working in community service, they are looked on as being of value to the community as a whole.

If this were not the case any number of nursing wards could not carry on. Their service is useful.

Robert, mentioned before, pointed out that working in community work was "just as much graft as being a soldier."

He said that there were "skives" even in the armed forces, "and quite a few." Robert slaves away 40 hour a week, like his 50,000 objector colleagues.

About seven per cent of young men in community service work in the social services.

Objectors have quickly gained the confidence of the public. Their public image is good.

Everyone knows at least one young man who is in community service who looks after an aunt or a neighbour with dedication.

Karl Grosch is himself in a wheelchair and is chairman of the society of invalids and their friends in Dreieich, near Frankfurt. He said that there were no better young men anywhere.

But from 1995 onwards there will not be so many. The Bundeswehr then needs every man it can get for its authorised strength.

For some time the generals have warned that the armed forces are bleeding to death. They demand fundamental political forethought.

Bundeswehr strategists are also having to think about how to keep the ship off the rocks. The armed forces must have a new image.

For this reason advertising for recruits is emphasising more and more the opportunities for sport, of enjoying life to the full with leisure and adventure in the armed forces.

The advertising is aimed primarily at bright young men. They are in demand. Technology freaks have wonderful opportunities of a good job in one of the most modern armies of the world.

Guido, 20, and a newly qualified electronics technician, is an aeroplane fan. He has been thinking whether he could, as a "genuine pacifist," go into the Bundeswehr?

He has decided for the Bundeswehr if he is posted to the military airfield at Wahn, near Cologne.

He smiled, embarrassed. His girlfriend has a room nearby to cheer him up. The money's rolling in. There is no time for sentimentality.

Furthermore the people at the local alternative national service office "were very nice. No trace of square-bashing. It was almost like a first-class hotel."

The formal visit to the advisory office for objectors to military service was shocking in some ways.

Guido called it "mental strip-tease," and left before him turn for interview came.

Rainer Stahlhacke

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 24 February 1989)